THE ENGLISH REVIEW

Current Comments

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THE German denunciation of the armament clauses of the Versailles Treaty ends a rather foolish and sordid chapter in the history of Europe. It took the British people only seven years to get back to realities from the hazy dreams associated with the Holy Alliance after Waterloo. We, unfortunately, have been wandering in a rather shoddy dreamland for seventeen years. It was absurd to suppose that, while announcing to the electors of Wavertree and Norwood that in no circumstance would we move a man or a gun in defence of any cause, however just, we could at the same time impress Germany with our unshakeable resolution to maintain the Versailles Treaty unless and until it was amended by general agreement. The Treaty of Versailles has now gone the way of the Treaty of Sevres, broken by the will power and resolution of one man. If England and France have learnt, however late, that no international diplomatic machinery can provide a substitute for the absence of a national will, and that the balance of power in Europe will inevitably correspond to the balance, not of material force, but of resolution and courage, then Herr Hitler will have rendered no mean service to this country.

The Future of Disarmament

THERE is one thing more to be said, and that concerns the Disarmament Conference. An attempt will be made to stage this farce once again, and to start a new series of negotiations designed to limit the armies of France, Germany, Russia, and Italy. These negotiations will fail, but not before they have provoked much ill-will. It is earnestly to be hoped that the Conservative party will have none of these, and will also strongly oppose any

guarantee of the Russian frontier. We shall be told that mutual pacts provide, in a re-armed Europe, the only guarantees of peace. Let us have the honesty to say straight out before the world that this is balderdash. We all know it. Let us have the courage to say so. The state of peace is itself a pact between nations to respect each other's frontiers. Since the explicit object of a war is to get rid of this pact, it is fantastic to suppose that the pact can rid us of war. It would be as sensible to expect to deter a burglar from entering your house by reminding him that the property inside was not his but yours.

The Case for a Quadruple Alliance

THE real purpose of the pacts is, of course, not to prevent war, but on one pretext or another to secure allies for the purposes of war. We do not often agree with Lord Beaverbrook, nor do we to-day, if we understand him to plead for isolation for its own sake. He is, however, unquestionably right in saying that we should denounce all treaties or pacts which pledge us to guarantee a frontier, for such engagements bind us in the given case to fight on one side or the other without reference either to our interests or to the cause at stake. What is worse, such pacts intensify the risk of war by leading each of the two nations whose frontiers are guaranteed to hope that by sufficient exercise of diplomatic skill they may get the guarantor onto their side. What is needed now is to turn the four-power understanding between France, Germany, Italy and ourselves into a definite military and naval alliance, thus solidifying the power of Western European civilization and creating a force which could insist effectively on the more general adoption of the standards of Western civilization in other countries. The alternative, sooner or later, is a return of what is in effect civil war in Western Europe, with results which will be fatal to all that Western Europe desires to preserve in the world around us.

Mr. Hirst's Government Finance

WE ask our readers to read with care and sympathy Mr. F. W. Hirst's article on the present state of our national finances. Mr. Hirst differs from the protectionist convictions of THE ENGLISH REVIEW as forcibly as we differ from his fiscal creed. He is entitled, however, to much more than an attentive hearing when he writes of Government finance. It is our view that industry would be even less able to bear extravagant taxation under the old fiscal system than it is to-day. But the question before us is whether any fiscal system will enable us to stand the present rate of governmental expenditure so long as prices remain at their present level. It is necessary to introduce this qualification because it is the peculiarity of post-war Government finance that it is almost unaffected by the price fluctuations. It thus becomes much less onerous when prices rise, and much more so when they fall. Indeed, if our present political system is to last, it may well prove necessary to make all Government payments rise or fall automatically with the index figure of wholesale prices.

If such a principle had been in operation in 1914, and had been extended to rents, our present National Debt would be half the burden it is to-day, the housing problem would not have arisen, half the great strikes would have been avoided (for the big national industries would have followed the Government practice), and we should not to-day have new industrial enterprise at a standstill.

The Menace of "Planning"

INSTEAD, we have "planning." It is a great misfortune, as Lord Eustace Percy and his colleagues remark in their new essay* on this subject, that the *word* has become a joke. It is more than a misfortune that the *thing* has become a farce. That blessed word "organiza-

* Planning for Employment. A preliminary study by several Members of Parliament. (Macmillan. 2s. net).

tion " has, in fact, bred disorganization, and is likely, as Lord Astor points out in *The Times* on March 18, to breed chaos in the near future if the anticipated milk surplus occurs. Yet planning is essential to Government. Most of the troubles of the present century are due from the deliberate abandonment by the governments of the last century of their obligation to plan. The abandonment began with the beginning of free trade and culminated in the repeal of the Corn Laws. But the duty of governments is not economic, but social planning. Their only concern with economics is to interfere when the free play of economic force is breeding an unhealthy social organization. Modern Planning makes the worst of both worlds. It is interfering with economic efficiency without pursuing sound social ends. Our agricultural policy, for instance, could be justified, however great its economc anomalies, if it were putting more men on the land, and recreating the conditions in which small-scale family farming could be a staple industry. Mr. Elliot, unfortunately, has failed entirely to increase the agricultural population. He is restricting new entrants into the industry and at every turn penalizing the small farmer and the small retailer who finds him his market. He is not planning for employment and he is not planning for an increase in the numbers of those enjoying economic independence. Yet these are the only legitimate objects of government planning. The rest is the business of the consumer, not of the Government.

The Enabling Bill

WE are glad to publish a brief comment by Captain Bernard Acworth on the Enabling Bill introduced at the House of Lords by Lord Melchett. This bill is designed to facilitate industrial planning and proposes to enable the majority in any industry to coerce the minority into cartels or combines. This coercion of minorities is itself vicious, but the purpose behind the bill is worse, for it is none other than to enable an industry to obtain

statutory power to dictate to the consumers of its products. Naturally safeguards abound. But the answer to this, as to all similar schemes, is simple. There is nothing whatever to prevent any industry to-day formulating and operating any scheme it likes where it is able to organize itself for the purpose. The consumers may, however, rebel, and a section of the industry may disagree. The only possible object of a Government scheme is to coerce either the producer or the consumer or both.

If it be argued that schemes propounded under this bill will in practice only aim at promoting the social health of the community or the national safety, then the answer is that such matters are the responsibility of the Government, and should not be dealt with by individual industries.

Planning for Employment

THE essay on " Planning for Employment " supports Lord Melchett's Enabling Bill. We can only imagine that the distinguished authors are victims of the modern tyranny of words. I came across an admirable instance of this tyranny in a passage in Mr. G. D. H. Cole's latest book on planning*—" A well organized society " he writes at one point in his argument, " would distribute as private incomes to its members as much as would equal the supply of individually consumable goods." Without questioning the abstract desirability of this proposal, its practical vileness only comes to light when we get away from the spell of words. The phrase, " A well-organized society," creates in the mind a very favourable sentimental impression of innumerable honest, able and intelligent men working in harmonious association ; anything such dear fellows did, we feel sub-consciously, would be for the best. But the phrase is entirely devoid of intellectual content. A well-organized society is the product, not the agent, of the distribution of wealth, and what Mr. Cole really means is that if he were Prime

* The Principles of Economic Planning. (Macmillan. 6s. net).

Minister he personally would fix the incomes of all his subjects and their relations one to another. I am sure my friend Mr. Cole would do this as fairly as anyone, but what he is really proposing is not a well-organized society, but a dictatorship of the most extreme kind, and demanding as its first weapon the right to assume control of the whole labour and property of all the citizens. This means a reversion to slavery, which may be " well organized," but can never be the basis of any " society."

" Planning for Employment " is riddled with phrases as attractive as Mr. Cole's " well-organized society." " A majority of the industry " and " an independent committee " are typical. Such phrases mean nothing in practice. Every reader of these notes well knows, if he shakes himself free from word worship and turns for guidance to his personal experience, that energetic planners never have any difficulty in getting " majorities " together.

The Technique of Plan-mongering

THE technique of plan-mongering is quite simple; once the Government is convinced of the need for a plan—and all governments are easily so convinced when they are necessarily advised by experts of the planning type—the rumour is sent around that the alternative to a voluntary plan is a State-imposed plan. The rest is easy, but the resulting plan has not been in fact demanded either by the industry or even by the Government, but by a group, and usually by a very interested group, of able individuals who probably commend their plan to an embarrassed Government as presenting some political advantage which has nothing to do with the needs of the industry at all. Thus Mr. Elliot's plans are dear to Mr. Elliot because he is a " planner " who is openly working for the " Leisure State." But they are recommended to the Government because they enable them to " do something for agriculture " without upsetting vested interests

or breaking their pledge about tariffs on meat. The industry admittedly wants not plans but tariffs, but it is told that it cannot have them and, faced with a choice between something or nothing, it takes something and trusts to luck. The plans may be good or bad, or good in parts, but they are not the result of a genuine majority opinion. As for the " independent committee," there is, of course, no such thing. The verdict of every committee is determined in advance by the Government, which appoints it. Lord Melchett and Mr. Sieff are not going to appoint, when they have become our dictators, a committee consisting of Mr. F. W. Hirst, Mr. Horrabin, and Mr. Walter Runciman to report on their plans. They will quite properly call for a report from Mr. Elliot, Mr. Cole, and Dr. Addison. If window-dressing is necessary it will be provided by drawing on our super-bureaucrats, Sir Arthur Salter, Sir Josiah Stamp, and so forth, who are mentally predisposed to any bureaucratic system because they are themselves brilliantly talented bureaucrats.

India and the Princes

THE India Bill goes on. The Government are attempting to gloss over the differences that now admittedly exist between themselves and the Princes; but on the first round Mr. Winston Churchill has scored. It is folly to pretend that these differences are being " exploited " by opponents of the Government bill. The case for federation depends precisely in the willingness of the Princes to co-operate in working the new Constitution. If they are unwilling to work it except on their own terms, the scheme will prove unworkable, because a genuine agreement by the Princes as to the definition of federal subjects, and a genuine willingness to surrender their sovereignty in regard to these subjects is a pre-requisite of the working not of this, but of any federal constitution for India. Opponents of the White Paper are naturally uneasy as to the Government's attitude to the Princes,

because they have watched the Government's manœuvres towards their opponents at home, who have been deliberately led step by step to the point when they can be told with a show of conviction that the measure is one to which public faith has been already pledged. There has been, unfortunately, very little evidence so far produced to discredit the very strong presumption that a similar procedure has been adopted by the Government in their negotiations with the Indian Princes.

DOUGLAS JERROLD.

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SURE OF

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Public Expenditure, Taxation, and Socialism

By Francis W. Hirst

WHATEVER our views about the *fiscal* question and its bearing on the internal and external trade of the country, it seems to me highly important that the average citizen who wants to avoid being ruined by the action of his government should acquaint himself, on the eve of Mr. Chamberlain's fourth Budget, with the *financial* position of the country. With a general election in sight, the layman cannot afford to leave the supposed mysteries of finance to the high priests of the Treasury. He ought to acquaint himself with the elementary facts that lie concealed under the conflicting and contradictory statements of Ministers and their critics in Parliament and the Press. In a cynical moment, he may recall Lewis Carrol's definition of a plain superficiality as a speech in which, any two points being taken, the speaker is found to lie wholly between those two points.

In my opinion, the national balance sheet and the annual Budget, as presented by the Chancellor of the Exchequer, are more intelligible than those of many great commercial companies. Thanks to our system of closing the accounts on 31 March and of budgeting in April or May for the new financial year, our Treasury system is probably the best that has ever been devised; and it has deservedly excited the admiration and envy of economists in other countries. An expert might spend weeks of study on the French Budget without gaining as accurate a view of the true position as he could obtain of ours in a day. I can claim to speak with some experience. I have written about every Budget since the Boer War; I have listened to most of the financial statements, and at many critical junctures I have had the privilege of discussing difficult problems with leading Ministers or Treasury officials.

Nevertheless, I do not pretend that the task of presenting a fair and faithful picture of what has happened since the National Government took office in 1931—the task I have undertaken at the request of the Editor of THE ENGLISH REVIEW—is a very easy one. The years 1931 and 1932 are bewildering to the pathfinder, not only because the Budget was balanced partly by taxation, partly by economies when Mr. Snowden abandoned the vicious system of borrowing for the unemployment dole, but also because we were driven off the gold standard on to an inconvertible paper currency. Happily that currency, though much depreciated in terms of gold, has proved remarkably stable. The internal purchasing power of a paper pound today is roughly equal to that of a gold pound in 1913, and nearly double that of a paper pound in 1924. The fall in gold prices has been prodigious; and we cannot wonder that the gold bloc countries are now in an almost desperate plight as a result of the public and private hoarding of gold on an unprecedented scale. The downward movement of sterling prices has of course been less; but few people realize that in the wholesale market (taking the average price of commodities) an English merchant can buy with eleven or twelve shillings as much as he could buy with a pound in 1924, or that with thirteen or fourteen shillings he can buy as much as he could buy with a pound in 1929, only six years ago.

This brings me to my first, and perhaps my most important, observation on public expenditure, including that of local authorities as well as of the National Government. It is this—that the nominal figures of expenditure, even when they have not risen, conceal a very large increase. Thus, the total national expenditure (including the self-balancing items) rose from £790 millions sterling in 1924–5 to £859 millions sterling in 1932–3; but if allowance be made for the greater value of the pound through the fall of prices, the true figure for the latter year should be about £1,600 millions sterling! Starting

from a base of 100 in 1913, the *Economist's* Index Number of Wholesale Prices had risen, after violent fluctuations, to 159 in 1924. It fell steadily to 127 in 1929. Then came another severe slump, followed by comparative stability since 1931. It sank to an average of 89 in 1931, and 86 in 1932 and 1933. In 1934 it recovered a little, and in February 1935, it was 91. Thus, wholesale prices are now 9 per cent. below 1913, and 28 per cent. below 1929, and the purchasing power of the pound sterling is correspondingly higher.* Fortunately for the country, the great improvement in national credit, which has taken place since the fall of the last Labour Government, has enabled the Chancellor of the Exchequer by skilful conversions to make large reductions in the interest on the National Debt. I will therefore only apply the change in the value of the pound to the nominal expenditure on the Supply Services since 1929. Their nominal cost has risen (taking the Supply Estimates) from £378 to £469 millions. In 1929, the *Economist's* Index Number averaged about 127, and in 1934 about 90. Therefore the real increase in cost and the real increase in the burden was from £378 to £662 millions. This last figure (£662) would have been the estimated cost of the Supply Services in the financial year ending 31 March, 1935, if the value of the pound in that year had been the same as its value in 1929. Consequently the real cost of the Civil Services, of the War Services and of the Revenue Departments has risen in six years by no less than 75 per cent. It will hardly be contended that the British taxpayers, or the British nation, are in a better position to pay more in taxation than they were in 1929. The total figures of unemployment have doubled; the cost of poor relief is much heavier; the value of British exports and re-exports fell from 839 millions sterling in 1929 to 447 millions sterling in 1934, though the latter figure, it is true,

* If the movement had been the other way I should not have complained if a moderate increase in the nominal expenditure had occurred to offset the rise in prices.

showed an improvement of 30 millions over our exports in 1933.

The published Estimates for the financial year, which begins on 1 April, show large additions to expenditure. The estimates for the Navy, Army and Air Force total over £124 millions. This is £10½ millions higher than last year's Estimates, and £14½ millions higher than those for 1931. The published Estimates for the Civil Services and Revenue Departments reach a total of over £430 millions, from which, however, those of the Post Office, £64 millions, may be excluded, as it is a self-supporting service. Taking the figures from the *Times* for 1 March, the growth of the Civil Service and Revenue Departments' Estimates is from £307 millions in 1930 to £354 millions in 1934 and £366 millions in 1935. But the latest figure of £366 millions is likely to be revised, as it includes a provisional item of over £2 millions for the unhappy Unemployment Assistance Board. In the muddle and confusion and waste of public money which surround our latest example of bureaucratic "planning," nobody can say what will happen to this item, nor what will be the fate of the taxpayer if Mr. Stanley tries to muddle through, following the example of his more illustrious planning colleague, the Minister for Agriculture. Again, only the nominal amount of £90,000 is included for beet sugar, because the promised legislation to authorize a continuation of this subsidy (which cost nearly four and a-half millions last year) has not yet been passed. Thirdly, only a nominal amount of £101,000 is included for the cattle subsidy, which will cost a great deal more under the provisions of an Emergency Bill.

It is impossible, therefore, to forecast with accuracy how the expenditure of the coming financial year will compare with that which, as I write, is nearly at an end. But it looks as if the original Estimates on which Mr. Chamberlain based his third Budget will be exceeded by thirty millions more or less. The more or less will depend mainly upon his estimate of the cost of unemploy-

ment in the coming year, and that again will depend upon whether he feels that he can be optimistic and look forward to another moderate improvement of trade. If he thinks, as I believe he does—judging from his answers to advocates of more expenditure on public works—that a substantial reduction of taxes would be the best means of promoting a natural growth of trade and revenue, then I would suggest a Treasury inquiry or a committee, like the Geddes Committee, to recommend economies in national expenditure of not less than thirty, forty, or fifty millions. This would only be carrying out the recommendations of the May report. Moreover, the fact that in recent years the real increase has been so much greater than the nominal increase of expenditure would alone justify such a proposal. It may be remembered that, only two or three years ago, when the total expenditure was considerably less, over a hundred Conservative members investigated the subject, and recommended large economies in the public services and in the grants to local authorities, many of which are notoriously extravagant and have been encouraged in their extravagance by these grants. There is no doubt that the whole business community would welcome such a move, especially if it were discounted in advance by a reduction of income tax to the level at which it stood during the last Conservative administration.

One of the strongest reasons for reducing the level of national expenditure is to be found in the enormous size of the National Debt. Americans look with alarm at the enormous borrowing now going on in the United States for the purposes of the New Deal—an alarm not unaccompanied by disappointment that it is having little or no effect upon the volume of unemployment. But even at the end of the current year, the debt per head in the United States will be less than half the debt per head in Great Britain. It is (happily) true that the interest on our national debt has been reduced since Mr. Chamberlain came into office. But, as he reminded the House last

year, the Sinking Fund had been suspended, and the American Debt payments have been dropped; and it is highly important that, as soon as possible, the Sinking Fund should be resumed.

In this connection it may be well to remind ourselves of the financial situation in 1931. The estimates of Mr. Snowden's April Budget amounted to nearly £885 millions. This total included £52 millions for Sinking Fund, £33 millions for the American Debt, and some £30 millions of interest on the internal debt which have since been saved by conversion loans. On the other hand, Mr. Snowden was then borrowing for unemployment and for the Road Fund at the rate of £70 millions a year. This, as I have mentioned, was put an end to when he balanced the Budget in the autumn by drastic additions to taxation, but also by substantial economies amounting to a total of £70 millions in a full year, of which £10 millions were to come from increased contributions for unemployment insurance. If the policy of economy had been pursued further in accordance with the recommendations of the May report—and this was the policy on which the last General Election was won—Mr. Chamberlain's position would now have been eminently satisfactory, and the burdens on the back of the British taxpayer might have been reduced to an endurable weight, whereas they are now in danger of being "stabilized" at an amount which weighs down and depresses all the springs of enterprise and industry.

But even then there would have been the problem of the National Debt—which is practically a dead-weight debt, as nearly all of it was incurred for expenditure on war or in consequence of deficits resulting from wars in the past. On the eve of the Great War, the National Debt amounted to about £650 millions. On 31 March, 1920, it amounted to £7,829 millions in a greatly inflated currency. After that it was appreciably diminished, but, according to the *Economist* of 16 March, 1935, it has now risen to £8,041 millions—a figure which, however, includes

£375 millions on account of the mysterious Exchange Equalization Fund and certain borrowings for statutory sinking funds. The present total is more than twelve times the pre-war figure; yet last year's balanced Budget was balanced, as we have seen, by a suspension of the Sinking Fund and of the interest on the American Debt. The reduction of interest was also partly due to the extraordinary cheapness of money and the abnormally low rate of discount, which enabled the Treasury to finance the large floating debt on very easy terms. This is a relief to taxpayers which cannot be regarded as permanent, though it may last for some time longer if the depression of world trade continues, and the Government refrains from borrowing for a New Deal.

Here I may inject a question whether the large loan or loans proposed by Mr. Lloyd George, with the support of a group of Socialistic Conservatives and Liberals, is compatible with the principle of a balanced Budget on which the National Government was formed. I can see no valid economic distinction between borrowing for the unemployment dole and borrowing for unemployment works. We are asked to borrow for public works in order to employ the unemployed, and so transfer them from the dole. That policy, as Mr. Chamberlain has pointed out, has never been successful in the past, and it has not been successful when practised on a gigantic scale by President Roosevelt during the last two years in the United States. But if we assume that two hundred thousand men are transferred from the dole to unemployment works for a year or two at a cost of two hundred millions, surely the borrowing for this purpose is on all fours with the last Labour Government's borrowing for the unemployed dole. We are, therefore, driven to conclude that the answer to my question must be in the negative. There would be no real distinction from the budgetary standpoint between Mr. Lloyd George's policy and that of the Labour Government. The Budget would be again unbalanced, and taxpayers would have to pay the

piper; for the Chancellor of the Exchequer would have to provide for interest and sinking fund on the public works loan.

One other financial question, already touched upon, may now be considered briefly. The general tariff has yielded new revenue to the extent of some thirty millions, but against this we must remember that even larger sums are being paid out in subsidies. The old housing subsidy has risen to £16 millions a year. The last estimate for wheat payments was £7 millions. The latest estimate for beet sugar was £4½ millions. The various milk subsidies seem likely to cost about three millions. Another three seem to have been allocated for meat. Two millions have to be paid to tramp shipping. The annual maximum for assisting the manufacture of oil from coal is one million. The contingent payment voted for the two Cunarders is £9½ millions. I pass over minor Subsidies, such as herrings, but the list I have given sufficiently proves to what a formidable extent the surplus revenue from which general relief might have been afforded to taxpayers has already been mortgaged.

Thus far my survey goes to prove that unless the growth of expenditure is promptly arrested our people will soon be back in the Bleak House which they were supposed to have left a year ago. Unfortunately, behind the present evil of extravagant expenditure and excessive taxation, there looms a far more formidable danger not merely to the prosperity of the nation but to the very existence of our freedom and institutions.

An old-fashioned Conservative wrote the other day to the *Morning Post*:—"Those who oppose the Government are constantly being told that the result of their proceedings will be: 'Let the Socialists in.' It is surely time to realize that the Socialists are in already. It is just because the present Government is a Socialist Government that it is being opposed." In the last year or two, many Gladstonian Liberals have written in a similar vein to the *News Chronicle* against those who, like

Mr. Lloyd George, have recommended Liberals to vote for Socialist candidates; but their letters have been consistently suppressed. In this respect, at any rate, genuine Conservatives are better off than genuine Liberals.

Although the terms of the letter I have quoted may be exaggerated, there can be no doubt that strong Socialistic tendencies have been developed in several departments of the National Government. It has been visible in the finance of unemployment. Generosity appeals to all our humane instincts; but common sense tells us that, after a certain point is reached, every increase of the dole will tend to deter men from seeking or accepting jobs. The nearer the dole approaches to the wage level, the greater will be the volume of unemployment, and the increased taxation which is required to provide for an increased dole must add to unemployment by lowering the purchasing power of the employed. This, of course, is elementary economics. If the Labour Party regains office, the nation will learn the truth by bitter experience.

But the most flagrant examples of State Socialism have been supplied by the Ministry of Agriculture. I need not repeat the well-known story of the beet sugar scheme, which was taken over by a Conservative Government from the first Labour Ministry. It has already cost over fifty millions, and there is no sign or hope that beet-growing in England will ever become self-supporting. But the peculiar merit of Mr. Elliot in the eyes of the Socialists is that he has enlarged and improved and put into operation the Agricultural Marketing Bill, the *chef d'œuvre* of the last Labour Government, and has developed a sort of Star Chamber procedure—armed with fines and imprisonment—against recalcitrant farmers, who want to grow what they like, and to buy and sell freely from and to their neighbours as they have done from time immemorial. The Agricultural Marketing Act of 1933 was rightly described in the House of Commons as "by far the most Socialistic measure that has been brought before Parliament in recent years." When some indepen-

dent members protested that a farmer ought to have a right to appeal to a court of law against a Ministerial Order, Sir Stafford Cripps supported Mr. Elliot, saying: "This is an excellent precedent which will be followed widely in the future." And when a concession was made by the Minister, Sir Stafford said on behalf of the Labour Party: "We are very sorry he has been frightened." Since then it has been made clear by the leaders of the Labour Party that, when they get into office, they will develop this method of legislation by Order in Council for the purpose of depriving capitalists of their capital, business men of their business, shopkeepers of their profits, and the people generally of their economic liberty.

Under the Agricultural Marketing Acts bureaucratic encroachments on the rights of individuals have been carried to an amazing extent with the assistance and co-operation of Socialists like Dr. Addison. It is estimated that these schemes have already involved in their network one-third of the farming operations of the country. They are always justified by the blessed word "planning," in which every true Socialist and Communist delights because it can be dated and referred back to the Five Years Plan of the Russian Soviet—a plan which, devised to make Russia industrially self-supporting, has reduced it to famine or semi-starvation. Mr. Elliot's theories and objectives are now familiar enough. In the House of Commons on 24 November, 1933, he stated:—

> "Planning of the trade of this country is forced on us by the necessities of the case. We shall have to come frequently to this House in the months and years immediately in front of us to ask for sanction for wide and sweeping changes in the economic structure—changes that are forced on us by the necessity of that economic planning which is one of the major necessities of the life of this and other countries of the world."

These and similar explanations of the costly schemes with which he has saddled the Conservative Party and

the country might have been quoted (with hardly any change of language) from the books of Mr. G. D. H. Cole and other interpreters of Marxism who inspire the Labour Party's " Programme of Action." If and when they form a Government, there is no doctrinal reason why Mr. Elliot should not remain in office.

I take it that one vital difference between a Socialist and a Conservative or a Liberal is that a Socialist dislikes above all things economic liberty and the free play of competition. If he wants to help agriculture, his first idea is to strangle all the country markets because market prices are not to his taste. He wants to regulate and fix them in a London bureau, with a large and well-paid staff which increases the patronage and importance of his Department. The salary of the chief official of the Milk Board is larger than that of the Prime Minister! It would be interesting to have a complete list of all the new officials and employees whom Mr. Elliot has appointed since he came into office at the expense of British producers, British consumers, and British taxpayers. In order to raise or " stabilize " prices the Minister for Agriculture has resorted—among other devices—to quotas on foreign imports, and has thereby got himself and the overseas trade of the country into a mesh of complications and embarrassments without parallel. In the case of meat the complaints of all parties except the butchers are so loud that an import levy is likely to be substituted for a quota. In the case of bacon, the application of quotas to Danish bacon resulted in the English public paying more for a smaller quantity of Danish bacon than they had previously paid for a larger quantity. Moreover, the " planning " of pigs and bacon by the Pig and Bacon Marketing Board instead of producing stability led to a wild state of confusion. First there was a shortage. Then the rise of prices led to a glut; and Mr. Elliot told the House of Commons in November, 1933 : " There is no danger whatever of finding too short a production of pigs in this country. My difficulty is to deal with the droves

upon droves, the hundreds of thousands of pigs, which are rushing and squealing upon us from every direction. The Pied Piper of Hamelin has nothing on me." Such are the consequences of these Socialistic schemes and plans, which were introduced in order to substitute Orderly Marketing for the chaos of *Laissez Faire!* No wonder that intelligent Conservative critics are asking why a Socialist Minister has been allowed to do these things. If the object was to protect agriculture, a tariff would have achieved the purpose without entailing the creation of an expensive bureaucracy and the destruction of economic liberty.

"Letting in the Socialists"

By Captain Bernard Acworth, D.S.O., R.N.

THERE is a widespread belief that Socialism, a stepping-stone to Communism in a traditionally law-abiding community, is a political faith natural to the poor. To many it seems incredible that the Communist State is being engineered, not by the poor, but by select, and sometimes anonymous, financiers and politicians. But such, unhappily, is the case. Those who enjoy the privilege of constant and intimate contact with what are called working-class men and women must be aware that the spirit of liberty, and self-respecting independence, is as strong, indeed generally stronger, in the poor than in those in more fortunate circumstances. If the natural love of liberty is temporarily obscured, and if the poor, in despair, are seeking to safeguard what remains of their liberties by Labour Movements, we should do well to remember the demoralising legislation since 1906, and the injustice and tyranny which modern capitalism, as opposed to genuine private enterprise, is inflicting upon millions of poor people.

Private enterprise, which brings all ranks of society into personal contact, whether in large enterprises or in a small one-man business, may be in harmony with the natural law. Great Trusts, subsidised by the State, and directed for the most part by financiers and politicians, are not. On the contrary, such Trusts are an application of the Communist principle.

This country is now intimidated by leaders of the National Government with the bogey of Socialism. Indeed, incredible as it seems, we are now invited to hand over the lives, and liberties, of 340 million illiterate, but free and loyal, Indians to the tender mercies of the "political-minded" classes as the only alternative to splitting the Conservative party and "letting in Cripps."

If the National Government were, in reality, a bulwark against Socialism such a policy might at least claim the doubtful justification of expediency. But is

the National Government, under its present leaders, opposed to Communism? Is it, in fact, National or International? To answer this question satisfactorily it may be well to refer to the political and economic plan already largely adopted by the National Government.

Unknown to the general public, *quasi*-political, but extra-Parliamentary, organisations have penetrated by stealth into the very cores, not only of the avowed Socialist Party, but of the three recognized groups of which the " National " Government is composed.

The key organization, or influence, is P.E.P. (The Political and Economic Planning Group), whose activities are so ably directed by its Chairman, Mr. Israel Moses Sieff, who combines financial interests in Palestine with his Deputy Chairmanship of Marks and Spencer Ltd. Associated with Mr. Sieff are Lord Melchett, Mr. Lawrence Neal, Mr. Kenneth Lindsay, M.P., and Mr. Malcolm MacDonald, M.P., as well as many other persons standing high in public esteem. Mr. Malcolm MacDonald is also a member of the small Committee directing the National Government's propaganda organization in association with the Conservative Central Office.

Space does not permit of giving in detail the Plan which these gentlemen seek to impose upon a people who once regarded personal liberty, within the moral law, as their birthright—hardly secured by centuries of political warfare and jealously defended under the Common Law of England.

The promoters of P.E.P. are not drawn from those sections of the community who are Producers. They are Middlemen, with the Middleman's economic mentality. Their Plan therefore devotes considerable attention to the question of Distribution. The Plan eulogises the Electric Grid System* and visualizes the application of

* The British Electric Grid System, which has been attributed to Mr. Samuel Insull's initiative, inflicts injustice on private enterprise. Furthermore, it is technically and economically unsound and strategically dangerous.

the same principle to the distribution of commodities in general. Thus we have seen set up the Milk Marketing "Grid", or Board, and numerous adaptations of the same system to agricultural products generally, each type of product under its own Soviet.

According to Mr. Sieff, the existing methods of retailing cannot be left unchanged. The Plan states, with apparent satisfaction, that "the multiple shop and the chain store are already bringing about notable modifications", and it emphasizes that "the waste involved in the 500,000 or more retail shops, one shop for every twenty households, cannot be allowed to continue to block the flow of goods from producer to consumer." This monopolistically-minded middleman does not concern himself with the natural rights of the smaller shop-keeper and of his employees, nor does he value the fact that the competition of independent retail traders is a safeguard to consumers, both as to quality and as to price.

In dealing with the Producer, P.E.P.'s Plan proposes to place the Producer, large or small, under the heel of the Middleman Commissar, while leaving to him the responsibility for production without the corresponding rights. According to the Planners, the farmer and manufacturer "may be conceived of as remaining in full control of all the operations of his farm or factory, but receiving from the duly constituted authority instructions as to the quantity and quality of his production, and as to the markets in which he will sell"; and they state, unashamedly, that "the constituted authority should be armed by an enabling act of Parliament to exercise powers of compulsion over minorities."

It is intended that this Sovietisation should be extended to "most if not all of the major fields of production". The Plan visualizes National Councils for Agriculture, Industry, Coal Mining, Transport, and so on, all statutory bodies "with considerable powers of self-government, including powers of compulsion within the province with which they are concerned."

Having, as a preliminary, extinguished the major natural and constitutional rights of the citizens, Mr. Sieff would then place the ownership of property under " Statutory Corporations and Public Utility Bodies, and of the Land Trusts ", for he emphasizes that " the planned economy which the nation needs to meet the demands of the twentieth century must clearly involve drastic inroads upon the rights of individual ownership of land, as at present understood ".

Finally, the Plan controls the citizens' private savings, on the ground that " stable money cannot be secured without considerable extension of control on behalf of the community over the flow of investment and the use which the individual makes of his capital ". " There are real difficulties," it adds, " in leaving him entirely free to invest his savings in any way he chooses ".

The major Joint Stock Banks are to be merged into one and are to be given " monopolistic privileges."

This Communist plan is coming steadily and easily into effect under the auspices of a National Government vociferously " keeping out the Socialists ".

To extend the tyrannies already, happily, causing exasperation, the Planners are now promoting the enabling measure which, when the Plan was formed, Mr. Sieff foresaw as necessary to put the industrial part of the conspiracy into full operation. Accordingly, the Industrial Reorganization League was recently formed, its Members again including Mr. Sieff and Lord Melchett. The purpose of this League is to arrange the adherence to the Plan of chosen representatives of Big Business, who, when secured, will, in its view, assure the easy passage through Parliament of Lord Melchett's Industrial Reorganization (Enabling) Bill, already read a first time in the House of Lords.

The New Fabian Research Bureau, of which the Rt. Hon. Dr. C. Addison is Chairman, appears to be primarily for the guidance of the avowed Socialist opposition. This Bureau, whose policy closely resembles that of

P.E.P., is responsible for a pamphlet which advocates a Ministry of Justice which would subject the Judicature, in all its branches, to Parliamentary and bureaucratic interference.

A careful study of the aims of P.E.P., and of its associates, reveals the divorce of the Plan from the principles of the Christian social order. This is, perhaps not altogether surprising when it is remembered that very recently Lord Melchett, with a sincerity and courage that do him honour, publicly repudiated Christianity—a repudiation which has not stood alone in influential circles in recent times. Many will be disposed to think that at the present time a Disabling Bill, rather than an Enabling one, is what our unhappy country needs.

Timid souls are being induced to stomach Mr. Baldwin's India Policy as the only alternative to letting in a Labour Government. Would they not be well advised to consider who is "letting in the Communists"?

The Workers' Paradise—from the Inside

By F. Britten Austin

LENIN said or wrote, somewhere in the inchoate mass of verbiage which is the Koran of modern Russia, that self-criticism was the duty of all comrades in the Socialist State. Only thus could improvement be achieved. Every word that Lenin uttered is, of course, sacredly authoritative, and Stalin some years back improved on his predecessor and made "self-criticism" obligatory by decree. Naturally, one must not criticize the principles of the Soviet State nor the inevitability of World-Revolution, one must not criticize the ruling hierarchy of the Communist Party nor the G.P.U., and the non-Party man finds it wise to keep his mouth shut about anything whatever, but the earnest Communist may—indeed is encouraged to—criticize what he may see as the faulty working of the machine whereof he is part. Stalin's decree was, in fact, superfluous; from the early days of the Revolution the Russian newspapers have been full of "self-criticism" within the limits above-mentioned. Without exception, the entire Russian Press, it is scarcely necessary to remark, is an integral part of the Soviet organization, rigidly controlled. It could not voice any vital criticism of the régime nor mention any major scandals, save as suited the policy of the all-powerful inner ring, but it can and does permit the innocuous blowing-off of a lot of steam on the part of the rank and file. Russian being as unknown as Chinese to the generality of the Western world, and Russian newspapers being difficult to obtain outside the Soviet paradise, the authorities do not trouble very much as to the extent to which those "self-criticisms" damage the idyllic picture presented by all the multiple agencies of Soviet propaganda. It would need a set of volumes the size of a Chinese encyclopædia to contain a tenth of these

piquant revelations. Those that follow are merely random, but typical, extracts of recent date.

From the beginning of the Soviet State the breakdown of the Russian transportation system has been one of the major troubles, intensified by the additional strain caused by the grandiose Five Year Plan. Here is an illuminating little story from the important journal *Za Industrialisatziou* (For Industrialization), published in Moscow, of 24 March, 1934. It is headed " The Briansk-Viasma Railroad " :—

" The Briansk-Viasma Railroad, the construction of which was already commenced under the old régime, was officially opened for traffic on 13 December, 1930.

For an unknown reason the first train did not meet any station on its trip. It is true that the sleepers jumped under its passage like piano-keys.

Twenty minutes after the departure of the official train, another train followed, a repair-train, loaded with bolts, rivets and even sleepers. . . . The next day the line was closed to all traffic.

. . . Construction was recommenced *ab ovo*. Towards the month of June, 1931, it was decided to authorize commercial traffic in the hope of opening the line to passengers around August. But the year 1931 passed and the work still continued. The spring of 1932 found the line in the same state. In the month of April, the embankment collapsed, on account of grave errors committed in the calculations. On a stretch of 46 kilometres the rails had fallen from the embankment. It was decided then to postpone the inauguration until 15 November, 1932. But 15 November arrived and the line was not yet finished. The stations were half-built; the locomotive-depot was not even begun; many water-tanks were lacking. The inauguration was postponed until 1 September, 1933. But the new Chief of Works, Borisov, sent a report to the People's Commissar for Ways and Communications, saying that it was then impossible

to open the line to traffic. That was postponed until 1 January, 1934.

Thus, three years after the first inauguration, the Briansk-Viasma Railroad was put into exploitation! But is the line completely finished? Not at all! The water-supply still requires great works. The construction of the locomotive-depot is not finished. The buildings destined for passengers are constructed in such a fashion that their façades open upon the woods and the rear upon the railway. To pass from the interior of the station to the platform one has to make the tour of the building. Seven million roubles must still be spent to finish the works. Up to the present 63 million roubles have been spent, and the calculated cost was only 35 millions."

On 10 March, 1934, *Isvestia*, official organ of the Soviet Government, publishes an item on the Donetzk Railroad :—

"The People's Commissar for Ways and Communications is charged to take rigorous measures to liquidate the faults in the working of the Donetzk Railroad. This line does not work with a sufficient activity to guarantee the execution of the Plan as regards transports, and especially coal and metallurgical transport.

For the months of January and February the Plan was executed only 78·5 per cent. Neither the Administration of the Donetzk Railroad, nor the directors of political sections have known how to organize Communists of the shock-brigades, Komsomols (Communist Youth), and non-Party people to combat the disorganizers who are damaging discipline and preventing the execution of the Plan.

The Organization Bureau of the Central Committee is requested to send at least 100 organizers, Party-members from stations and depots, 20 qualified propagandists and eight newspaper editors, to be at the

disposition of the Political Section of the railroad, and 20 other specialists to direct the works."

A typically Soviet idea of how to speed up a railroad to send along eight newspaper editors! Nor, to judge from innumerable other news-items, of which the following from *Pravda*, 18 May, 1934, is typical, can the percentage of execution of the Plan be necessarily regarded as accurate :—

"Artemovsk, 17 May: The representative of the Communist Party Commission of Control, Comrade Pschenitzin, has commenced an inquiry into the falsified book-keeping of car-loading on the Donetzk line. The accounts are so faked that there is no means of giving a truthful picture of the work of this line. Here are some facts: On 2 April the total of coal-loadings on this line was 87,557 tons. If this total is divided by 18—18 tons being the content of a two-axled car—one has 4,864 cars. But in the accounts one finds a figure, come none knows whence, of 5,323 cars. On 27 April the line loaded 5,102 cars. In the accounts this figure has grown to 5,502 cars, 400 more. On 20 April, instead of giving the real number of 4,583 cars, the accounts show a fantastic figure of 5,473 cars, 890 more. Thus, during the month of April alone, the 'big combiners' succeeded in cheating the State of 11,000 cars. In the first 15 days of May they similarly 'added' 2,380 cars.

It is certain that all this was only possible thanks to complaisance of the traffic-manager of the line, Comrade Shkuratov."

The explanation of some of this is furnished by *Za Industrialisatziou* for 15 May, 1934 :—

"The Chief of the Depot of the railroad, Ratchkovski, his assistant Gaidarov, the directors of the exploitation of transports Rasnitchenko and Kojevnikov, and the station-master at Rykovo, Bogdanov, his assistant Kalik, and many other agents and employees

(of the Rykovo mines), systematically organized the mass-pillage of cars. They managed to accumulate a reserve of cars which escaped control. . . . Retaining cars longer than the normal time, 11½ hours prescribed by the Administration, they arranged by underhand methods to obtain from the management of the Railroad premiums for having allegedly diminished the time of detention of the cars.

The Mines Administration used these cars, intended for the transport of coal, to send mineral ores into the interior. Also, with these cars, they formed trains for the workmen. Often they hired them out to other organizations. The time-tables of reception and return were falsified. . . . Thanks to the pillage of cars and to the fictitious control, the Mines Administration obtained from the management of the railroad premiums to the extent of 678,000 roubles in 1933 alone. A large part of this sum was distributed among the members of the 'band.' Ratchkovski received 4,000 roubles, Gaidarov 5,000, Rasnitchenko 3,000 roubles. These fakers and crooks are going to appear before the Tribunal of the Proletariat."

The case of the Donetzk railroad is anything but unique. Here is another item, from *Pravda*, 12 May, 1934 :—

"What is a Bureau of Itineraries? Until now, the Bureau of Itineraries was thought to be an uniquely railroad organization. . . . But the Bureau of Itineraries at Kiev made a somewhat original exception to the rule. This Bureau had two heads : first the railroad, and secondly 'Lessosbyte' (part of the Timber Trust). A numerous personnel of despatchers, operators, warehousemen, statisticians and telephonists was attached to it. All displayed an intense activity. They counted empty cars, pushed along trains loaded with timber, and in addition made a lot of money. . . . One half of the expenses for personnel,

all charged to the railroad, served gallantly to remunerate those of 'Lessobyte,' the other half went to the railroad employees of the section. This continued until 1 May of the current year, date at which the reciprocal benefit of 'Lessobyte' and the railroad collapsed. The 'Unified' Bureau was unveiled, and its manager, Rabinovitch, was summoned before the courts.

But Rabinovitch 'transformed' himself. He evacuated his material into the city, 4 Meringovskaia Street, and put up a new sign 'Base of Lessosbyte of Kiev.' The sign is new, the work is the same. As before Rabinovitch uses the telephone and the telegraph of the railroad, gets information as to empty cars, 'pushes' his own loadings, meddles with the affairs of the section and the station. Rabinovitch asks for cars and cars come to him? Why shouldn't they come when Rabinovitch's assistant is none other than the principal despatcher of the section, Comrade Barko? Others also duplicate their functions; a certain Comrade Voronin and other employees of the railroad. The Kiev section should deliver 500 cars daily to the Southern system, it delivers only 350 to 400. To Korosten it should deliver 150 cars, and delivers only 50 to 70. But 'Lessosbyte' gets its cars punctually. . . . What do you think of it, Comrade Prosecutor?"

However, it may not be too terrible for Comrade Rabinovitch; you never can tell with Soviet justice, as witness the following from *Pravda*, 5 March, 1934:—

"The People's Commissar for Ways and Communications, Andreiev, has decreed a disciplinary punishment to be applied to the chiefs of the North Caucasus Railroad. Here is the decree: 'Traffic-manager Galovin is condemned to 10 days' imprisonment for irregular conduct. The assistant-manager, Majetsov, is dismissed from his post and appointed to

an inferior post for having tolerated the actions of Galovin. The General Manager of the Railroad, Livchitz, is blamed for not having countermanded the illegal order of the said Galovin.

This decree was promulgated on 27 February. It was published next day in the central press, and received at the head office of the North Caucasus Railroad. Five days have passed, and the decree has not been applied to anyone. Majetsov continues to act as before. Galovin walks around. Why is the order of Andreiev not executed?

A somewhat curious explanation was given by the Chief of the Administrative Section of the railroad, Stodolski :—

'The decree of the People's Commissar has not been executed for two reasons :—

First : The General Manager of the Railroad has not yet given the order to execute the decree of the People's Commissar.

Second : We have no premises in which to lodge employees condemned to prison.' "

General Manager Livchitz, officially blamed by the said decree, is evidently not without a sense of humour. Another nice little story appears in *Pravda*, 17 April, 1934 :—

"The station-master of Voskressensk (Moscow-Kazan line) received one day from the head office a questionnaire on the matter of detached car-parts. He opened the questionnaire, and his face went pale with fright. There were 2,697 questions. And he must give the answers immediately, otherwise he would be held responsible for sabotage.

'To-day I shall not be able to sleep,' he announced to his subordinates. 'I have received an urgent paper from the head office. I will let everything go but, I will do my duty.' The next day, at 9 o'clock in the morning he had finished. Haggard, tottering

with fatigue, he emerged from his office. What had he written? There were no detached car-parts at Voskressensk. He had spent the entire night inscribing the word 'No' against each of the 2,697 questions."

Pravda, 15 May, 1934, has a seriously informative article entitled "All as before on the Kurskaia Line":—

". . . Here the railroad tracks scarcely hold in place. This refers to Sector 4 of the Kurskaia Line. And this sector is the most important of the Moscow-Kursk line, of which it commands all the communications. There is an intense passenger and goods traffic over the tracks of Sector 4, where about 65,000 (25 per cent.) sleepers are rotten. They must be changed immediately.

The management faced with this urgent necessity and knowing that at the end of the year the new heavy F.D. locomotives would be put in service, generously allotted 41,000 sleepers to the sector. In fact, only 12,000 have been received, and the Chief of the Sector, Khomianin, has only placed 3,000.

The situation as to the rails is no better. They are very badly worn (from 2 to 3 mm.) . . . Ballast is non-existent. A dirty mass (containing not less than 20 per cent. of mud) sustains the main line over this sector of great importance. . . . In spring the sleepers disappear in the mud when the trains pass.

The bridge over the River Plava just holds together. . . . The history of this bridge is instructive. It was built in 1869. The first fissures were discovered in 1923. . . . Special commissions examined the bridge in 1928, 1931 and 1933. Each time the increase in the fissures was noted. . . . Projects were elaborated. The first commission put on record: 'The passage of two locomotives Series E, or similar models, and of normal cars is undesirable. The use of this bridge can only be authorized for a speed not exceeding 10 kilometres an hour.'

Thus, the passage of two powerful locomotives is undesirable. What about the passage of six or seven powerful locomotives? To this question the track-manager, Comrade Svitte, caring nothing for circulars and warnings, replied: 'Let them pass.' In the month of April, coming from the South, the reserve-locomotives, Series E.M., travelled towards Moscow in groups of six or seven. The bridge is rather long, and the locomotives filled it. (Do not forget that each locomotive weighs over 6,000 poods (a pood is 16·80 kilos).) The bridge gave way. . . . Then people became concerned. More commissions arrived. Recently the General Manager of the line, Comrade Karpenko himself came, accompanied by the track-manager, Comrade Svitte. The assistant manager, Comrade Brylov, arrived also. He stayed two days and left on 30 April for Moscow. He promised to return immediately after the First of May celebrations, and to take in hand the repairs. But to-day we are at 11 May, and the promise has not been kept. Brylov has not arrived; there are no materials and the workmen are missing."

Railroad travel seems to be a formidable affair in the Soviet Union. Any curious readers wishing to enlighten themselves further will find further illumination in *Pravda*, 9 April, 1934, and 16 May, 1934.

The river traffic of the Soviet Union is almost as important as that by rail. The newspapers are full of piquant items as to the vicissitudes of this navigation, closed, of course, during the winter. Here is an item from *Pravda*, 7 May, 1934, headed, "Transportation on the Volga":—

"During the first eight days of navigation more than half a score of steamers and tugs were immobilized as the result of accidents. The steamer *Fifteen Years Komsomol*, on her maiden trip, had to abandon the barges she was towing, and returned to Samara

with a broken propeller-shaft. Two steamers which had just been repaired in the port of Saratov, the *Second* and the *Abhasia* could not even reach their first stopping-place, their engines having broken down and their hulls allowing the water to enter. The steamer *Blücher* broke her paddle-wheel. The steamer *Pamiat Azova* did the same. The motor-barges *Ocetia* and *Grousia* smashed their hulls in colliding with the bridge at Gorki (formerly Nijni-Novgorod). The majority of the boats made their first voyages almost empty. The steamer *Ouecievitch* arrived from Gorki at Samara with seven passengers and one ton of merchandise."

One reason for the emptiness of the steamers is revealed by *Pravda*, 12 May, 1934 :—

"The entire quay of the port of Gorki is encumbered with merchandise. There are quantities of wheat, iron, clothing, baskets, brooms and many other things . . . and the boats go off without a cargo. . . . How explain this? It is because the organization for loading and discharge is non-existent. . . . The situation is the same in the ports of Rybinsk, Jaroslavl and Kinechema."

Earlier in its issue of 21 March, 1934, *Pravda* had been concerned with the state of things on the Volga :—

"One remembers the lighthouse-keepers on the Volga when a steamer runs aground. Then the exasperated captain lowers his boat and looks for the keeper. One usually finds him somewhat far from the bank (at a distance of 3 to 5 kilometres). The captain interrogates him severely :—

'Why was the light not lit in this place?'

'There wasn't any oil.'

'Why were you not on watch on the bank?'

'It was raining. There was no shelter on the bank. So I went to the village.'

'Why were the flares on the bank not lit?'

'When it rains, as I have no coat, I can't light them.'

The captain sends in a report and the keeper is dismissed and punished. But none of the chiefs has thought of the most simple things, i.e. that one cannot light the lights when there is no oil, that one can only reach the light-buoys on condition of having a boat, and that in truth it is difficult to light the flares without a coat when it rains. Now on the lower course of the Volga navigation has already commenced, but a complete disorder reigns in those sectors. For example, in the Nijni-Novgorod sector, instead of there being 1,000 light-buoys there are only 400. Instead of 500 tons of oil there are only 20 kilos. Plans have been made to supply 150 boats to this sector, but none have been received."

The song of the Volga boatmen is apparently as melancholy as ever. In my next article we shall turn from them to industry, to that colossal industrialization which is the world-challenge of the Five Year Plan.

Surprising Orientals

By Sir Harry Luke, C.M.G.

[*Sketches Nos.* I–VI *appeared in the February and March numbers of* THE ENGLISH REVIEW.]

VII.—MESSIAHS AND ORPHANS.

JERUSALEM, which attracts to its walls people of many races and many religions, is seldom without a Messiah, never without a crank. Long-haired eccentrics in fantastic garb; others, perhaps more normally shorn and clad yet equally original in outlook, provide a regular contribution to the Holy City's inexhaustible variety. One of these gentlemen was wont to draw more notice to himself than he could otherwise have expected to secure by the distinctive manner in which he smoked. His cigarette was placed inside his hat-band, whence it was connected with his mouth by a long rubber tube.

More picturesque and more lovable than the smoker was Musa, an old Persian Jew, a familiar figure as he rode about Jerusalem on his white ass, dressed in a dark robe and a black Persian felt bonnet. When I first knew Musa he was enjoying quasi-charitable employment as a petition-writer for the Department of Travel and Immigration; and I remember his application for exemption from municipal rates on the strength of being a Messiah. He had previously, under the Military régime in 1918, asked for free quarters on the same ground. Father Waggett, who was then working in the Administration, thought this a good reason, which it was, and allotted him a room in the Bokharan quarter, outside the city walls, rent free.

For some years the present writer lived in the middle of the Old City of Jerusalem, in a house whose site is of considerable historic interest. He and his family were perhaps the only lay people in the world whose garden was a two-storied Crusaders' cloister. They were almost unique in another respect, in that, although living inside

the city walls, they paid rent. For it is safe to say that most of the dwellers in the Old City, of whatever faith, live rent free, they and their forebears having been housed there for centuries by their respective religious organizations in order to maintain the numbers and influence of their particular denomination within that much contested area.

So that a considerable proportion of the inhabitants of the innermost Jerusalem belongs to the category of *schnorrers*, that is to say, of people who live, not necessarily deservedly, on the charity of others. Palestine in general, and Jerusalem in particular, have always, it would appear, made a powerful appeal to the world's charitable instincts; and, if some of these tend at times to be misplaced, others are canalized quite frequently into suitable and useful directions. Thus, an important section, numerically, of Jerusalem's population is composed of orphans. Jersualem is probably more prolific in orphans than any other town not recently scourged by war. The acreage covered by the orphanages of the Holy City must be considerable; and even the Government of Palestine had a small provision in its budget for orphan relief. So when our Qavass (the attendant who in Eastern countries waits upon and accompanies official personages, civil and ecclesiastical), who had been Qavass to countless British Consuls in Jerusalem before the War and had lost an eye in their service, went totally blind and became unable to work, I applied for a compassionate allowance for him from this vote since he was not eligible for a pension and there was no other vote even remotely appropriate to his special case. It was refused on the ground that he was not an orphan. As the old fellow was on the wrong side of 65 he was one of the most authentic orphans in all Jerusalem; but it was some time before the Treasury mind would bring itself to contemplate an orphan otherwise than in the guise of a small girl in pigtails and a flannel dress, taking part in a caterpillar walk.

VIII.—The Dead Bishop.

He was a Bishop of the Orthodox Church in Palestine, and he was in charge of that part of the territory in his Patriarch's jurisdiction which surrounds a Galilean city not mentioned in the Old Testament but mentioned prominently in the New. I knew and liked him well; indeed, we had been colleagues on a Commission connected with his Patriarchate, on which he was wont to give his advice frankly and without fear or favour, even when it might not be altogether pleasing to some of those of his own cloth. He had a broader culture and a wider range of interests than most of his brother-Bishops (of whom there were then about a dozen in Jerusalem, their function being to assist the Patriarch in the services of the Church and to enhance by their presence the dignity of his Court) : he was something of a scholar, something of an archæologist, something of a collector and something of a sportsman. Hale, hearty and physically active, he loved to wander alone with his gun in the Jordan Valley in pursuit of the elusive red-leg; he took pleasure in his collection of ancient pottery and in his coins. And then, one day, suddenly and without warning, they telephoned to us to Jerusalem that he was dead.

Unhappily, faction plays a big part in the life of the Christian East. Among the Bishop's flock there had long been two parties; and, because one party decided to support the Bishop when he arrived among them, the other, for that reason and to his distress, constituted itself his opponents. Now the Bishop was, as I have said, a robust and vigorous person who had been out shooting only a few days before his end and on the morning of his death had gone down to his cathedral to pontificate at a religious ceremony, apparently in his usual health. So the Police were quite naturally suspicious. His enemies were persistent; his collection of coins was reputed valuable. And they suggested a post-mortem. The post-mortem was held and revealed

nothing abnormal; and the funeral was fixed for the following afternoon.

I flew from Jerusalem to attend it in an almost unbearable *khamsin**; the day was the sultriest I have known in many years of sojourn in the Holy Land. The cathedral, which was on the small side, was densely packed with a hot and excited crowd, and the smell of sweating humanity won an easy victory over that of the incense. It was not without some difficulty that a way was made for me to reach my stall, and not until I got to it did I come (for so solid was the throng) face to face with my poor friend. And yet no, not literally face to face as I had anticipated. There indeed he sat, tied to his chair, fully vested and mitred as is the practice; but, instead of the features I had expected to see, pallid in death, no doubt, but familiar, I beheld with dismay the head completely wrapped up in a towel, on which the mitre was perched with an effect at once grotesque and macabre. A handsome, dignified man in life, he suggested in this hideous travesty, if the thing can be imagined, an elaborate ecclesiastical scarecrow.

They explained that, owing to the post-mortem and the *khamsîn*, no other procedure had been possible.

After the church service and the funeral oration the crowd struggled and swarmed on to the adjoining graveyard, where the committal sentences were said by three Bishops sent from Jerusalem to perform the last rites over their deceased brother. Good staff work is not the outstanding feature of the Eastern Churches, and the grave was not yet ready. I should explain that it is the custom of the Orthodox to bury those of their Bishops who die in office not prone in a coffin but sitting upright on their chair, unenclosed in any receptacle; and a depth of seven to eight feet was therefore required (for Orthodox mitres are high) and took some time to attain. Most of the congregation waited till the bitter end in order to scatter a few handfuls of earth and a few sprigs of

* The hot east wind from the desert.

rosemary on the remains; but when I looked round for the three Bishops I found that they had slipped away as soon as they had said their words, leaving, so far as they were concerned, their once outspoken but now dumb colleague to fend for himself.

IX.—How a Language was Re-born.

On any day in Jerusalem you may observe, as in a rainbow, the full gamut of Jewry. You will see every sort of Jew, western and eastern, agnostic and ultra-orthodox, rubbing shoulders there : the American business man; the graduate of Continental universities; the Ashkenazim of the ghettos of central and eastern Europe, distinguished on the Sabbath day by their gabardines of orange or purple velvet and their wide velvet fur-encircled hats; the black-turbaned Sephardim of the Near East, still using the fifteenth century Castilian speech of their forefathers, expelled from Spain by Ferdinand and Isabella; the Bokharan Jew resplendent in the rich colours and stuffs of Central Asia; the gnome-like little Jew of the Yemen, as dark-skinned as his Arab neighbour and a cunning artificer in metals; the bent, shuffling, bespectacled Jew of the "Halukka," spending an unhealthy life in some ill-lighted hovel blinking out his eyesight over the Talmud at the expense of wealthier co-religionists abroad, who are content to practise a vicarious piety. They are here, these people—not all, indeed, but a good many of them—because they have obeyed the call of Zionism; for it is the object of Zionism to gather within a single allegiance to their race, within a single community of national feeling, the Jews scattered into this wide divergence of tongue and environment and antecedents. Zionism is essentially a racial movement; but how was Zionism to give to these Jews from the four corners of the earth, with nothing but the blood tie in common, not only the feeling of racial indentity but the means to express it? What two types, for example, could be more dissimilar than the prosperous New York

stockbroker and the shrivelled little worker in filigree from the Red Sea coast? And how could such people communicate with one another? Clearly, it had to be the task of the Zionist to add a common language to the community of blood; and this is how it was done.

In a Lithuanian ghetto there grew up in the third quarter of the last century in the study of the Talmud a frail, delicate, consumptive young Jew called Eliezer Lazarovich Elianov. That was his Russian name; his Jewish name was Ben Yehuda. As a Talmudic student he had, of course, an expert knowledge of classical, liturgical Hebrew, which was the language of the Jews' prayers and scriptures and nothing more. The everyday language of the Jews of Eastern Europe is the dialect known as Yiddish, whose basis is Middle High German with the addition of a few common Hebrew words and a multitude of foreign words varying according to the linguistic surroundings of the speaker. One day a Jewish merchant of Moscow passed through the village, heard the young Talmudist preaching in the synagogue and, impressed by his eloquence, took him with him to Moscow to receive a secular education at his expense. The merchant thought he was doing a useful act in saving this talented lad from the narrow environment of the ghetto in order to give him a good western training.

In 1877 the Russians went to war with the Turks in support of their Bulgarian fellow-Slavs, and the sympathies of the merchant's household, as of Russian Jews in general, lay with the Turks. Not so those of Ben Yehuda, whose sickly frame nourished a will of iron. The Russians were right, he declared, to come to the aid of their blood-brothers; the Jews would be in very different case if they did the same instead of scattering through the universe, isolated and divided. But he found only one supporter for his point of view, the merchant's eldest daughter Deborah, to whom in his spare time he gave lessons in Hebrew. His patron and the rest of the family had no patience with his perversity, so he decided

to go away. As he left, Deborah handed him her scanty savings and said:

"When you send for me, I will come to you."

I will make a long story short.

The little Jew saw his destiny in Palestine and, as his life-work, the task of reviving Hebrew as a spoken, living tongue which would supplant Yiddish, that jargon of the abject, debased and servile ghetto, and would serve as the common link between the Jews of all the world in their new dispensation. Penniless but determined, he now married his Deborah and announced to her on their way to the Holy Land that henceforth he would never address her save in Hebrew. At that time they were the only couple in the world to speak it.

But this business of reviving a dead language, above all, a sacred language, was not so easy. We have seen the reasons that impelled Ben Yehuda; but there was another point of view. To the very orthodox Jews, of whom there were many in Jerusalem—people who for centuries had grown up in the cramping environment of the Talmud-Torah to believe that the letter of the Law is more vital than life itself, that it is more important to perpetuate the taboos which separate the Jews from their fellow-men than to unite—to these folk, deeply religious according to their lights and dutiful, law-abiding citizens but not the people likely to seize with *élan* upon a new and revolutionary idea, the ambition of Ben Yehuda was the rankest sacrilege. That he, an orthodox Jew and Rabbinical student, should wish to speak to them in Hebrew, should seek to prostitute the tongue sacred above all others, the holy speech of Jehovah, to the degrading uses of everyday life, was accursed and not to be tolerated. So they launched against him all the anathemas in their spiritual arsenal, and cast him and his wife out from among them.

Of course, there was something to be said for them, too. Those very customs and taboos, at whose narrow-

ness and lack of soul one is tempted to laugh or be indignant, all those theological hair-splittings, those outworn ritual and dietetic prohibitions—all those things were but the machinery whereby the Jews in their dispersion had sought to maintain their national identity. And, indeed, who can say that in the years of the Captivity and in the centuries of the Diaspora the Jews could have preserved their existence as a race apart but for the creation of a mode of life designed to separate them from their neighbours and to keep them intact? Ben Yehuda thought that to speak the language of their fathers was a better bond than to wear side-curls or to refrain from eating pork and shell-fish; but he had a hard row to hoe. After some very difficult years of uphill journalistic work, when almost every man's hand was against them, poor Deborah died of consumption; and, when Ben Yehuda took her to burial, he could find only one friend willing to go with him. As the pathetic little cortége wended its way into the Valley of Jehoshaphat a crowd of Ashkenazi Jews stoned the coffin, and the porters who were carrying it put it down and ran away.

In the course of years, things changed. There came the Balfour Declaration and its impetus to Zionism; and the Jews awoke one day to find that Hebrew had won its place as the written, spoken and living language of their race. And Ben Yehuda was still there, still the artificer of its metamorphosis from an archaic vehicle of prayer to a modern tongue capable of coping with the needs of the twentieth century. He died in January, 1923, with his pen on a page of what was almost the last quire of his monumental Lexicon of modern Hebrew; and at his funeral, which was very different from that of poor Deborah, Ronald Storrs, Governor of Jerusalem, quoted with even more than his usual felicity:

> "E sull'eterne pagine
> Cadde la stanca man'."

Heights Austere

By Sir Patrick Ford

FROM where tumultuous torrents, far below,
With endless clamour through the gorges ring,
And lowing kine in chosen pastures blend
Their leisur'd music with the strenuous noise
And ceaseless ferment of the haunts of men,
No sound, or ghost, or echo of a sound
Mounts to the silence of these heights austere;
But faints and fades and dies to nothingness
Long ere its last vibrations might impinge
And desecrate that silence absolute
That holds these regions of eternal snows,
These frozen altars of the Infinite;
That when the eager winds of God are still,
And all His bellowing thunders held in check,
Themselves eternal, face the eternal stars,
The suns of summer and the winter nights
With such a vast and overwhelming calm
As quells all feeble man's imagining,
And stuns his spirit to a humbleness,
A dumb acceptance of a majesty
That thus accepted, this with him made one,
Remakes man's spirit, not as separate
And vainly challenging blind Fate's decrees,
But as a vital and acknowledg'd note,
However small, essential and ordain'd
To make complete Creation's symphony.

Austria and the World: A Question

By Basil Druitt

THAT the preservation of peace within Austria is alarmingly necessary to the preservation of peace in Europe, is, it may be hoped, well enough realized, even in England, to need no further warning. Though indeed no review of Austria's present state can ignore the close relation, especially as regards Germany, between her internal, and her foreign, affairs, the main purpose of this article is to view her present domestic crisis in the light of yet deeper issues, which are generally obscured in the surface-foam of so-called "practical politics."

For, in a peculiar and vital way, the crisis of Austria is the crisis of Europe. Each European nation is, of course, to some extent a microcosm of the whole; but in Austria the essential issues are most simply and urgently set forth. Spain perhaps can offer an almost equal significance; but, for several reasons, the Spanish stage lacks as yet the effective entry of a Fascist or "totalitarian" party. In Italy this force has long since won the day, as also, in different guise, in the German Reich. In France, even if a similar course has of late seemed possible, the religious implications are far less directly pressing. And England still marches, she knows not whither, behind the smoke-screen of her indomitable evasion of first principles. Beside our befogged valley of compromise, or even the clearer contours of the great Continental states, little Austria presents, in stark array, the inescapable alternatives of Western Man.

This event was, in one respect, unlikely, inasmuch as the modern Austrian is not moulded for epic circumstance, and no people is more fitted to adorn a serene and settled order, a fact which makes their present fate the sadder. Yet, even in recent years, the parties of the Left have produced figures staunch unto death; and, in the other

camp, the calm, bright courage of Engelbert Dollfuss will ever transcend the faults or merits of the cause he led. In any case, whether or not the Great Producer has casted wisely, there is no doubt of the rôle which this nation is called to play.

That Western Man is very sick is to-day acknowledged by all the discerning leaders of most divers schools of healing. The platitudes of politicians and rotarians are so meaningless as to be discounted; and the idea that we are but suffering the growing-pains of a splendid new world may be left for the consolation of British bishops and the purveyors of New Deals. One optimism alone is worth consideration—the nationalist creed of the anti-liberal states. But in most cases it is not hard to perceive that it is the optimism of despair; and the anti-liberal government, at present in power in Austria, is in one significant respect unique—it does not extol patriotism in the place of religion. For it proclaims, as sanctions of its policy, the social teaching of the one international vehicle of the European tradition that remains—the Roman Church.

It has two tremendous rivals—the National-Socialist creed of its great northern neighbour and the rancour of the industrial proletariat. Neither, in Austria, speaks with a quite coherent voice; and it is very probable that any government, nationalist or even clerical, could easily turn the proletarian eyes from the ideals of Moscow were it able to effect some degree of economic prosperity: for bread and ideals are natural allies. But this truth is conditioned by a deeper truth, all too commonly ignored, or even denied, by the modern politician—that there must be at least some living relation between the nature of the ideals and the manner of earning the bread; and therein lies the crux of Austria's problem, and thence comes the lesson which it may still be in her power to teach the world.

But before we proceed to amplify this general statement, we must turn our eyes upon that great spectre

from the north which has devoured one Federal Chancellor and still haunts night and day the footsteps of his successor.

There is nothing essentially new in Pan-Germanism in Austria. The now celebrated "Brown Book" ("Beiträge zur Vorgeschichte und Geschichte der Julirevolte")* admits the pre-War origin of German-Nationalism in Austria and traces, quite fairly, the post-War connection between the rise of National-Socialism in Bavaria and the party favouring an "Anschluss" in Austria; and it indignantly points to the indisputable financial aid which, both before and after the Nazi Revolution in Germany, the Austrian German-Nationalists obtained from across the German frontier. But it is silent upon what is also certain—that only the stern veto of the Entente prevented union with Germany immediately after the War—and it discreetly ignores the fact that, not only did the Social-Democrats agree on this matter with the Nationalists, but an unofficial plebiscite in the Austrian Tyrol declared by a vast majority for Germany. It is true that there came, soon after, a considerable change in Austrian opinion and the wish for a central-German state, excluding Prussia.† It is also true that Austrian supporters of an Anschluss are generally moved as much by its real or supposed commercial benefits as by any deep sentiment of affinity. But here again we see the natural influence of bread upon ideals; and the essential truth is that (and even apart from causes at work at least since the birth of the German Empire in the XIX century) the Peace Treaties made the existence of a powerful Anschluss-party in Austria psychologically inevitable.‡

* Which contains the Austrian government's cogent allegations of German Nazi influence behind the abortive Putsch of July, 1934.

† One is tempted to add that one of the worst errors of the Entente, in the light of later events, was the prevention of this compromise, which had great merits, both on religious and economic grounds.

‡ Any reader who desires a terse, but adequate and just, account of Austrian affairs during the first six years after the War cannot do better than read Mr. C. A. Macartney's book "The Social Revolution in Austria" (1926).

Even if we pass over the fact that the defeat of the Central Powers and the disruption of the Habsburg empire were consummated, for Austria, by a desperate economic isolation from the new sovereign states of Czechoslovakia and Hungary; even if we assert the independence of Vienna as necessary to her historic status as a mart and salon of the nations—even if we ignore that isolation because it has since ended and invoke that status because it is still not quite destroyed, we are still left with weighty grounds for caution before condemning the pro-German party in Austria. Their opponent compatriots sometimes deride them for not really knowing what they want. But in this they are surely in a widespread plight; and they do indeed most definitely want one thing—protection and security in the arming camp of Europe, a protection of which the peace-treaties did everything possible to deprive them. They see, to the south-west, a new ally of their country, yet who speaks another tongue, was but recently a foe, and has annexed a fair area of German-speaking Austria; while, half-circling them south and east, live one certain enemy and two uncertain friends, each again—and bitterly—different in speech and culture. But, in the north, they see a mighty power, of ten times their numbers, sharing their language, now openly forging, if only a "defensive," panoply which, even in numerical proportion, their own paupered state can never muster, and eager to take them as brothers within her threshold.* We cannot here discuss the question whether, in view of Germany's own grave distress, Austria's commerce and finance would actually be bettered by the Anschluss or even by a mere "Zoll-Union"†; nor have we time for more than bare statement of the desperate unbalance between rural and urban Austria. But it is surely clear that the other aspects hardly need re-inforcement. Had

* There is, however, said to be a section of Herr Hitler's advisers who, apart from diplomatic caution, think the acquisition of unbusinesslike Austria would not be an asset.

† The other side says No or at east asserts that the trade-restrictions between the two peoples are the fault of the Hitler government.

the Weimar Reich remained liberal or even turned monarchist, had the "Führer" and his creed never won power, the party of union would still have been prominent, if less violent, upon the Austrian stage.

Is it then Versailles alone that keeps Austria out of the "Dritte Reich"? By no means. The present government is a resolute coalition of conservative parties and their now legalized amateur armies*—a coalition which, though not agreed on every principle, views the bed-rock traditions of Austria's past as the only sound basis of her future.† For here is the land and here its sovereign city that, till 1918, was home of the oldest royal house and most internationally-married nobility in Europe: here is the "Ostmark" that twice repelled the Turk from the arteries of Christendom and was core of an empire which, though never in reality the equal of its resounding title, yet survived, in some ways with greater strength, the blows alike of Richelieu, Napoleon, and remorseless Prussia. For half a thousand years it has felt itself the heart and forum of the Germanies. Shall we marvel that it will not lightly surrender?

The Austrian patriot of the post-War generation has no wish to restore the hopeless federation that was the later Habsburg Reich.‡ But he joins his elders in pointing to the unique status of historic Austria as

* Of these, by far the largest, Prince Starhemberg's "Heimwehr," is often in English papers misleadingly labelled "clerical Fascists" but contains many Protestants, Jews, and indifferents—not to mention Nazi and Socialist apostates who may be a doubtful asset. But its leaders and the most part of its ranks are undoubtedly devoted patriots (if not too skilled in arms). The specifically clericalist force is the much smaller "Ostmärkischen Sturmscharen" (nicknamed "The Pope's Indians"), recruited from the immediate party of Chancellor Schuschnigg.

Pay is negligible, and neither is in any sense a part of the tiny regular army of 20,000 men.

† Unfortunately, whereas the Habsburg civil service was a miracle of integrity, the same cannot be said of its successor, upon which the government must rely.

‡ But he often regrets the lost opportunity, already mentioned of a central-German state excluding Prussia.

sanction of her independence. He claims that, though German, her culture is enriched with Roman and supra-national traditions and must never fall, as the rest have fallen, before upstart Prussia and her perverted Germanism.* If the rest of the German world has gone mad, and even if Austria was not before a distinct nation, there is all the more reason for her being a nation now. If her fate is to be weak in pocket and in arms, then is Italy a better helper than Hitler; for she and Italy share much, even though not in speech, which the Germany of the Dritte Reich is deliberately rejecting. And he invokes one circumstance which can hardly be dubbed sentimental —an Anschluss would be the instant cause of European war, a disaster, indeed, averted in July, 1934, solely by the devotion of the Federal Army and the Heimwehr.

We can but briefly pause to answer the natural question, What classes and what numbers follow these rival causes? The answer in truth is not easy; and the confident percentages of some press-correspondents should always be read with caution. The divisions cut across class and calling almost everywhere, with the obvious exception of the Catholic clergy and almost all the nobility. The Austrians are at least as pliable as other peoples,† and much hangs upon the (not constant) decision of group-leaders in township, profession, or factory; and there is naturally a large element which travels with the wind (just as, under the Social-Democrats, professed allegiance to the party was very advisable in seeking work, so is it at least equally so under their successors). There is some reason to believe the peasants are growing increasingly Nazi, especially in Carinthia; and the provinces of Salzburg and Tyrol have always been " Gross-Deutsch " strongholds (though the clumsy July revolt showed how

* So far as the much-abused factor of blood goes, the educated classes in Austria are, of course, at least as " Nordic " (whatever that means) as the Prussians.

† Thus the proletarian districts of Vienna are divided into areas, all pro-government, all Nazi, or all Marxist.

small a number are likely to risk their lives). Even well-informed Austrians, when government-supporters, are apt either, through hope, to understate their opponent's numbers or, from anxiety, to utter panic figures.

One thing is quite certain and another very probable. (1) Among all strata of the middle classes, especially the small traders, both in big town and in country, brother is often divided against brother, father against son, and life-long friendships have been broken. (2) National-Socialists will tell you that the "youth of Austria" is overwhelmingly filled with Pan-German Faith. This is a great over-statement, yet truer than loyalists would admit. The ebullience of university-students is no great criterion; and the government is using every effort to win (or regain) a hold upon the schools. But the present writer has no light grounds for suggesting that the present renascence of Austrian patriotism is, on the whole, a cry from the heart of those who fought and suffered in the War for loyalty to things their sons have never known—Kaiser and Dual Crown.

The government's chief strength lies in the fact that their enemies are divided. But, though banned and diminished, the liberal and "Red" factions are far from dead, and their rumoured pragmatic alliance with the Nazis far from certain. This bring us to the question which it is our goal to ask:—

Can the principles of the present government hold sway—have they indeed any meaning—in the context of the economic order of which Austria is a member?

Man is an incorrigible worshipper. There is nothing in his perceptual environment, dead or alive, from an oak-tree to a woman, that he has not worshipped; and the variety of emotional combinations he can attach to his objects seems practically infinite. Bolshevism hopes to cure him; yet millions yearly adore the stuffed Lenin, nor is it hard to see the nature of the passion which sacri-

fices present comfort for the "Collective's" ultimate good. Any theory of Man which plans a worshipless world is bound to make a fool of itself.

For the most part Man's "higher religions" have achieved, indeed begun with, some measure of integration of his worship and his daily life—an integration ever threatened, it is true, by inconsistency and corruption, yet sufficiently attained, at least for a time, to make just tolerable an otherwise insufferable world. But there is one world-religion—and it happens to be that which has nursed and moulded our Western World for nearly two thousand years—which has, from its very nature, built compromise rather than integration as the bridge between worship and life. To appease protest at this bare bold statement, let it be said:—(1) It is in no way meant to imply that Christianity is false in essence or lower than its rivals; for none, by their integration, have destroyed the dualism in the heart of Man. (2) It is indeed arguable (though not here argued) that Christianity is highest for the very reason that it has admitted compromise but rejected integration. (3) It is not denied that that compromise has, broadly speaking, worked and may even work again. All that is denied is that it is working now.

The social programme of the present Austrian government is, it may fairly be said, directed to the same end as is clearly expressed in the Encyclical *Quadragesimo Anno* (1931) of the present Pope:—

> "Since the present economic régime is based mainly upon Capital and Labour, it follows that the principles of right reason and Christian social philosophy regarding Capital, Labour, and their mutual co-operation, must be accepted in theory and reduced to practice."

Now it is clearly assumed—both in this pronouncement and in its great forerunner, the *Rerum Novarum* of Leo XIII—that "the present economic régime" is not essentially incompatible with the Christian compromise; and this assumption is the very thing which this article sets

out to question. We must assume some acquaintance with—for no summary could possibly convey—that masterpiece of clarity, depth, and charity which is the *Rerum Novarum*. We must also assume, in order to set our question in its clearest light, that that document, together with the *Quadragesimo Anno*, even when stripped of their theological premisses, present a substantially true account both of human nature and of the forces that have made our modern world; and any one who cannot share that assumption had better read no further. A third—and otherwise still bolder—assumption is then permissible—that the Socialist proletariat of Austria will turn, not to the "Aryan" mythology of the Dritte Reich, but back to the faith of its fathers, and that Austria can thus become the stage of the most crucial and tremendous drama that Europe can present—an attempt to make "the present economic régime" the basis of a Christian state.

What, then, is the present economic régime, and what is a Christian state? It is significant that the papal definitions of "capital" and "labour" are so wide as to include any advanced, and almost any primitive, society; so that the specific modern notion of "capitalism" is largely evaded and the Thomistic doctrines of property and distributive justice appear as applicable to the most industrialized modern community. But one need not be a Marxist to see that, though "capital" can undoubtedly possess this widespread denotation, the term "capitalism" as usually, however loosely, applied to the modern world, largely refers to a distinctly modern function. It is not necessary to our argument to enter the thickets of economic definition. But in order to reveal the central issue, it is necessary to refer to a time in Europe's history when a Christian state in some sense did exist and capitalism in the modern sense did not.

While, for many reasons, it would be most unwise to say that a Christian polity became doomed with the passing of feudalism, it is feasible to claim that a feudal, and a Christian, order are not essential incompatibles.

It is a truism that the feudal system was never complete and that it eludes comprehensive definition. But for our purpose we may describe it as a system of contract between the strong and the weak, based mainly on the ownership of land. That it was often far more, and sometimes perhaps less, than this need not obstruct us, nor need the fact that it was never quite independent of burghers and freemen who were outside a feudal contract. The crucial point is that the most potent baron and the most prosperous merchant could maintain themselves, if they chose, without transgressing those principles, either of social obligation or of a "just profit," which the doctors of the Church propounded and to which modern Pontiffs have appealed. It is immaterial to reply that the motive of avarice often governed, and even in part created, the form and incidents of the system; for we can readily agree that, in that respect, a truly Christian polity has never existed and never will. It is, however, here claimed that avarice was not an intrinsic function and that this is the first necessary condition of a Christian state.

We must assuredly not go further and suppose that no other system can satisfy this condition. But we can accept Pope Leo's sketch, re-inforced by Pius XI, of what has actually happened.

> ". . . . For the ancient working-men's guilds were abolished in the last century, and no other protective organization took their place. Public institutions and the laws set aside the ancient religion. Hence by degrees it has come to pass that working-men have been surrendered, isolated and helpless, to the hard-heartedness of employers and the greed of unchecked competition. The mischief has been increased by rapacious usury which, though more than once condemned by the Church, is nevertheless, under a different guise, but with the like injustice, still practised by covetous and grasping men. To this must be added that the hiring of labour and the conduct of trade are concentrated in the hands of comparatively few; so that a small number of very rich men have been able to lay upon the teeming masses of the labouring poor a yoke little better than that of slavery itself" (*Rerum Novarum*, Sec. 2).

It is Pius XI's avowed intention to bring the story up-to-date :—

> " This concentration of power has led to a threefold struggle for domination. First, there is the struggle for dictatorship in the economic sphere itself; then the fierce battle to acquire control of the State, so that its resources and authority may be abused in the economic struggles; finally the clash between states themselves . . . . because the nations apply their power and political influence, regardless of circumstances, to promote the economic advantages of their citizens; and because, vice versa, economic forces and economic domination are used to decide political controversies between peoples " (*Quadragesimo Anno*).

The substance of this is positively Marxist (though the remedy, of course, is very different and the inevitability of class-war is denied elsewhere in the latter Bull). Even if some historians would find grounds for objection, none could say the Vatican was unaware of urgent evils (many of which, such as working-conditions, have been appreciably lessened, but replaced by the menace of unemployment). But it is remarkable that neither pope seems conscious that the system is to-day sustained by what may be called *compulsory avarice*. The term " usury," if clear enough in the XIII century, now begs the whole question. Any undergraduate can answer that it is impossible to know to-day when profit is in excess of risk and the safety of shareholders or to assess the reward due to those upon whose skill the very life of shareholders may depend : and any office-boy can see that it is not only the small company of " bulls " and " bears " that lives by unchristian means, but that the whole vast masses of the industrial nexus—director, investor, or artisan—are in some way inextricably involved in the great machinery of Mammon; and it is incredible that the Sovereign Pontiff cannot see it too.

For the essential distinction of modern " capitalism " is the joint-stock company. Years ago Sir William Ashley (and, of course, many another non-Marxist economist) pointed out that " directors feel themselves

to be trustees for the shareholders, and morally bound, as such, to sacrifice philanthropy to gain." * The context of this sentence referred to the effect on the workmen. But this is far from the whole story. Shareholders are presumably trustees for wives and heirs; and security depends upon dividends produced by means over which the average investor has no control whatever and which the most scrupulous director has indeed to encourage—the creation of a market for goods which satisfy a demand only in the sense of that unreal world of academic economics that assumes that demand and want or need are necessarily identical; so that the vital question—what goods and what life are consonant with a Christian, *or any other*, theory of human welfare?—can go begging till it find answer in the trumpets of Armageddon.

"It is true," as Pius XI himself says, "that even to-day these economic conditions do not everywhere exist exclusively. . . . There are, for instance, the agricultural classes, who form the larger portion of the human family, and who find in their occupation the means of obtaining honestly and justly what is needful for their maintenance" (*Quadragesimo Anno*). But, as he says again, "it is the capitalist economic régime that. . . . has invaded and pervaded the economic and social sphere even of those who live outside its ambit, influencing them, and, as it were, intimately affecting them by its advantages, inconveniences, and vices." We have no space here to review those "vices." It is, indeed, unnecessary to insist that many voices—not Catholic nor even Christian—are crying from the Babel of modern thought against the effects of our economy, among them many that would deny the immorality of much that the Pontiff has in mind. What concerns us is, first, that he and all are agreed that those effects extend beyond the immediate classes concerned, and, second, that he does not recognize them as inevitable in that economy. "Surely," he says, "it

* "Economic Organisation of England." In fairness to Leo XIII, be it said the thing was not quite so obvious in 1891.

[capitalism] is not vicious of its very nature." This judgment is obtained by abstracting the concept "capital" from the living web of history, so as to conclude that avarice in "the present economic régime" is not inherent but merely adheres in the sense that it must adhere to all human institutions.

But there is no need even to assume that the masses of our time are more avaricious than at any other. The average investor may seek no more than a sufficient income (if his wife or motor-car does not insist on more; for "no one," as Aquinas say, "ought to live other than becomingly"); but, even so, he is a necessary pawn in the great game of Grab. Be he capitalist, "worker," or almost even peasant, modern man, even if not born with nor acquiring it, has avarice thrust upon him. Does Rome approve an order wherein almost the sole exceptions are priests, professors, and psychiatrists? (each powerless to reform it).

Of course not: the answer has already been given. The present Pope believes that a change of heart is possible without a change of order. He sees that the Socialist solution is neither Christian nor consonant with the primal needs of Man. But one wonders if Leo XIII, returned to earth to-day, might not repeat his words with added meaning—"When a society is perishing, the wholesome advice to give to those who would restore it is to call it to the principles from which it sprang" (*Rerum Novarum*)—and might ask if our society can ever embrace those principles again without first passing through a fire whose fuel is indeed already gathered for the tinder.

Even if space allowed it, it were surely unnecessary to describe the task which the present government in Austria must essay if it is to answer the question we have asked. And what of the task which must come first? A minority dictatorship, whatever its right and the might it can command, requires at least the aid of personal genius. Whether that genius is there we shall not ask.

We may, however, conclude by saying that avarice is not conspicuous in this people's nature. Nor is strength.

Mountains as a rule are clumsily set forth and need the re-creation of a painter to give them form. Yet there is a Stadtgarten in Carinthia, viewed whence the pine-fringed slopes of the Karawanken part like a mighty curtain to reveal, beyond, the naked heights that guard the present frontiers of the land. Behind us, in an immemorial township, the outward calm of the citizens covers a bewildered feud within the heart of the Germanies. But, before us, the stately Drava flows unheeding to the Danube, at perfect distance between town and mountains and parting an emerald plain spangled with sudden hills, each church- or castle-crowned (the churches still filled, the castles but splendid shells of a discarded function). And there are the people of the fields, winning their scanty but faithful meed from plough or pasture.

Let us hope that, here and elsewhere in Europe, the eternal peasant will still be extorting from the earth her ancient toll, when the strutting robots of the electric cities that are now his masters will have been sickled in a very different harvest.

The Cat

By Hector McGrew

IT was all a question of nerves, Andrews decided. Given your nerves were good enough, you could get away with anything—even murder.

In Andrews' view it was not murder. Law in this country has no punishment for those who steal other men's wives; Andrews had supplied the law's omission. He had laid his plans long in advance and patiently waited his opportunity. But at the last moment he had been afraid of his nerves.

As he still knelt on Cavanagh's quivering body, he was pleased to note that his fingers untwisting the silk scarf from his victim's soft neck were steady as rock. That was good. Yet at the same time his heart bounded like a startled hare. And that was not so good, for it rose out of a feeling deeper than reason that he was not alone in the room. Had anyone heard the soft thud of the falling body? Unlikely, for the lash of rain on the windows would drown all sound of that, and of the short scuffle preceding it. Still kneeling, his eyes searched the room from corner to corner. There was nothing. It was pure nerves, of course.

He shook his head impatiently and rose to his feet. Time was flying; there was still much to do. He set about his task methodically. Moving silently, he ransacked drawer after drawer, strewing the contents over the floor. All the money he could find; four rings (Cavanagh, he reflected grimly, was always fond of jewellery); the dead man's gold watch and pearl pin; a little silver clock from the mantel; everything valuable and easy to carry he stuffed into his pockets.

And then again there came the sense of being watched. He swung round quickly, and stepped back with a gasp of fear. Crouching on the body was a huge black cat. To an ordinary man—if ordinary men ever do commit murder—its unexpected appearance would have been

sufficiently startling. Upon Andrews the effect was infinitely greater.

Everybody has at least one kink in his make-up, one weakness. Andrews' kink was his fear of cats. Years ago a Persian kitten had jumped upon his back and the great, raw lad—as he then was—had screamed until the little ball of grey fluff was removed. This fear had never left him; it swept upon him now in a wave. Every detail of the animal's marking burned itself into his brain; the tiny white tuft of hair below its chin; the dab of white on its left forepaw.

For a moment he remained staring, a swift pang of nausea flinging black spots before his eyes, then self-control returning, he snapped off the light, tiptoed like a grey shadow down the stair and past the caretaker's empty office out into the deserted square.

There he drew a sobbing breath of relief. Luck was with him. The pouring rain had emptied the streets. He took his way towards the river, crossed the bridge and, turning aside, scrambled to the water's edge. Wrapping the articles he had brought from Cavanagh's flat into a tight bundle with the silk scarf, he sank it in the oily black water.

Ten minutes more and he was in bed—safe.

The following morning was Sunday and Andrews, as usual, breakfasted alone in his room. No. 13 Blacklock Street was one of a row of terrace houses of a type known in the north of England as "cellar-kitchens"; the ingenious result of some economical builder's effort to provide a parlour house on the ground space of a "back-to back." Andrews' landlady, Mrs. Thwaites, and her daughter lived during the day in a semi-subterranean kitchen opening directly on to the grimy patch of garden. Andrews had the parlour on the floor above, reached from the street by an outer flight of concrete steps. In the language of Mrs. Thwaites' frequent "adverts" it was a "combined room suitable for single gent or respectable working man." To it all Andrews' meals were carried

toilsomely from the kitchen below. To use Mrs. Thwaites' idiom " it was a 'ard 'ouse to follow." But to Andrews it was a cheap lodging with a considerable amount of privacy. Never at any time a companionable man, Andrews liked privacy, liked to be alone. And this morning of all mornings.

As he munched his bacon his mind was busy with the events of the previous evening. Restlessness possessed him. Hurrying through his simple meal he set out to walk it off, if possible.

Had he overlooked anything in the execution of that revenge he had planned for so many weeks? Was there any link to connect him with the murder? Three years since Cavanagh had disappeared from Glasgow with Andrews' wife. Time enough for the circumstances to have been forgotten; he hadn't been known as Andrews then, either. Twelve months since Jenny died. Time enough for Cavanagh to settle in the Portman Square flat, little dreaming his enemy was lodging in Leefield, too, a mile and a half away. Who was to connect the death of a wealthy, dissipated bachelor with a decent, hard-working garage mechanic? No one, he felt sure, had seen him enter or leave the flat, and a motive for murder was supplied in the articles stolen from it, now safely sunk in the river.

Unconsciously, his footsteps had led him into Portman Square. An ambulance stood before the block containing Cavanagh's flat and a group of curious idlers hovered expectantly on the pavement. He joined them and put a question, though he knew, of course, what the answer would be.

" A chap found dead in one o' them flats," came the reply from a man in an ancient bowler hat. Then in a lowered voice:

"Murder, they say. Look they're bringing him out now."

Andrews felt that he ought to walk on, wanted to walk on—with half his will—yet an insane fancy to see the last of the man he had killed held him there.

The door opened and two men carried out the stretcher with its blanket-covered burden. Andrews' nerves tightened. Something brushing against his leg made him glance down. It was a cat—a black cat—*the* cat.

Had he known that cats are sometimes perversely attracted towards those who hate them he might have controlled himself, but he did not know. The absurd notion that the creature recognized him and wished to connect him with its master's murder made him act on impulse. Lifting his foot he kicked out savagely at it catching the man in the bowler on the ankle. That individual turned and swore violently, but already Andrews was hurrying away as fast as his legs would carry him.

When at last he looked round, the man was still rubbing his leg and staring after him.

During the ensuing week events moved much as he had anticipated. The newspapers were full of the " Mysterious Murder in a Leefield Flat," and the police were reported to be " following up important clues." This latter statement he interpreted as meaning they had circulated a description of the missing articles to all pawnshops and were awaiting results.

They would wait a long time.

What troubled him more was the murder as a topic of conversation. Everyone spoke of it; his workmates at the garage; the men he met in the " Wheatsheaf " of an evening; his landlady, Mrs. Thwaites. Mrs. Thwaites, in particular, was an avid reader of the more sensational prints, and even her lodger's more than usual gruffness could not altogether check her garrulity. Moreover, she had an " inside " source of information in this instance which added fuel to her interest.

Having set Andrews' meal before him one evening, she paused with one red hand on the table-cloth and said:

" My sister tells me the p'lice has got another clue—"

" Your sister? " queried Andrews.

" Yes. 'Er and 'er 'usband is caretakers at them

Portman Square flats. She says the p'lice 'as found fingerprints all over the room."

A humorless man, Andrews almost smiled.

"All they'll be needing then, is the man to fit them?" he replied.

Not in the least disconcerted, Mrs. Thwaites continued:

"A queer thing she tells me, too. It was 'er as found the body, and sitting on it was a big black cat—'is cat. Gave 'er quite a turn, it did."

She leaned forward impressively.

"That cat must 'a' seen the murder done . . . if only it could speak!"

Andrews put down his knife and fork. Blast the woman's prating tongue! What put such crazy thoughts into her head? As if the cat—curse the cat.

He resumed his meal with a lessened appetite as Mrs. Thwaites clattered away downstairs.

The days that followed were curiously blank to Andrews. The slow fire of hate which had once filled and sustained him was gone, extinguished by the destruction of its object. In this strange fashion it seemed his life had come to a dead end. Now that immediate danger of discovery was passing he worked, ate, and slept automatically. Slept, indeed, like the dead . . . until the coming of the dream.

It came on the Saturday night exactly a fortnight after the murder. He had gone to bed as usual and, despite a storm of wind and rain, fallen almost instantly asleep. . . .

. . . It seemed he stood in darkness, a faintly luminous darkness that swirled round twin points of green light. As it thinned and cleared, the walls of the chamber took on the familiar shape of Cavanagh's room. Touching his foot was something soft, heavy, and inert—Cavanagh's body. He did not need to look, for he knew. Also, his eyes were fixed elsewhere, on the green points of light—the cat's eyes. He saw it more clearly now than on that

night—a hideous black brute with open jaws displaying the red cavern of its mouth. He could almost count the hairs in the tiny white tufts on its neck and foot.

His former nausea returned, and with it there swam in his hot brain a strange sense of danger. In the indefinable way in which knowledge comes in dreams, he knew it threatened him.

He sprang towards it, but, even as his hands closed upon it, with a twist of the body it eluded him. Then began a furious chase. A dozen times he had it cornered and as often did it just avoid his clutch. A careless sweep of his arm sent the little silver clock crashing from the mantelpiece. At that he paused; the madness left him; he must get away. . . .

. . . Now he was creeping down the darkened stair. Sense of time left him. He seemed to move interminably through endless shadowy streets. Dim faces leered; tenuous fingers pointed, not at him, but behind. He glanced back; the cat was following. Faster and faster he went; his breath grew scant. With a last bound he reached his door, was through, slammed it—and woke. . . .

His shirt was sticking to his dank back in patches and the blood drummed in his ears an irregular tattoo, odd, disconcerting. Above its intermittent thump rose the squeak and rattle of the paper window-blind and the moan of the wind that moved it. And through these noises was interwoven the mewing of a cat.

To Andrews' whirling mind, bemused with the terror of the dream, this last sound brought relief, affording a reason for the fantasy. Turning his pillow, he presently slept again.

Not until the middle of the next day did he remember that the mewing had seemed to come from *within* the house. And Mrs. Thwaites had no cat; otherwise he would never have taken the room. The disturbing thought stayed with him all day. Though he strove to assure himself his imagination had played him a trick, his mind refused to be convinced.

Three nights later the dream recurred. Again he woke in a sweating terror to the unmistakable mewing of a cat. Not in his room certainly, yet just as certainly within the house. In an attempt to locate the sound he rose, shivering, and opening his bedroom door, listened. Silence. At length the draughts of the passage drove him, still shivering, back to bed. But not to sleep, except in uneasy snatches, waking a dozen times to real or fancied feline cries.

What exactly he dreaded he did not care to own even to himself. Yet with the cold light of morning he was sufficiently master of his nerves again to put matters to the test. When the landlady's daughter brought up his breakfast he steeled himself to ask: "Did ye hear anything through the night—like a cat mewing—inside the house I mean?"

"Why no, Mr. Andrews—how could I?"

The girl's denial and quick, queer glance were at once a confirmation and a warning to Andrews. His ears *had* deceived him. The incredible had happened. In future he must be careful not to speak of such fancies.

Facing an outward danger a man may well be bold, but who can bear against what he believes to be the crumbling of his own mind? Without a grain of superstition in his nature, Andrews was impelled to the belief that only a sickness of his brain could conjure up such a phantasy. He began to dread the night hours. To induce sleep he soaked himself in the "Wheatsheaf's" crude whisky. Perhaps his very dread of the dream evoked it, for almost every night he wakened trembling from it, and buried his head in his blankets to drown the cat's cries.

Leefield became a city peopled with cats. Men and women he passed unseeingly, but everywhere, crouching round corners, creeping along walls were cats—black, with tiny tufts of white hairs. Since he could not now be sure whether each one he saw was real or merely another flicker of his obsession he passed them all with clenched hands and stony eyes fixed straight ahead.

One small relief during this period did he have: Mrs. Thwaites ceased to talk of the murder. Her sister, it seemed, had gone away for a much needed holiday and the landlady's "inside" source of information had thus dried up. Mrs. Thwaites ceased to talk to her lodger at all, indeed, save in brief, nervous snatches, eyeing him apprehensively the while.

That change in manner Andrews construed as meaning his own strangeness was becoming noticeable. It was noticed elsewhere he knew. At the garage a cat mascot on a car radiator was found battered to shreds. When one is haunted by black cats that peep and jeer it is hard to resist smashing one of their silly heads—especially if there is a spanner in one's hand. It passed as an eccentricity—not to be repeated—and Andrews escaped with a reprimand.

Only in the "Wheatsheaf" for a time did he feel secure. There in the smoke of the bar parlour, amid the hum of conversation and the eternal rattle of dominoes, he drowned his fears in whisky and felt again a sane man. Yet at length even that haven failed him.

One evening the landlord's cat sat singeing its nose before the blazing fire. Andrews, solitary in his corner, turned his eyes anywhere but on it. Very soon he knew he would be unable to sit there with any appearance of calmness, but go he could not; his legs refused their office.

Something was happening to the cat—something odd about its colour.

"Look out!" shouted a big man across the room.

Andrews had slumped forward to the floor in a faint. His face was queer and blue, and froth bubbled on his lips.

The big man and another took him home later.

"What I can't understand," said the big man as they returned to the "Wheatsheaf," "is what he meant by 'the black cat.' Anyone with half-an-eye can see old Tommy is as ginger as can be."

The doctor Mrs. Thwaites summoned pursed up his lips and looked grave.

"Your nerves are in a fearful state," he told Andrews, "and I don't like the heart. Unless you lay up I won't be responsible."

Out in the passage he looked quizzically at Mrs. Thwaites, and said:

"A few days in bed will do him no harm. It will keep him off"——he cocked his hand to his lips in a gesture of drinking.

Andrews lay in bed for the best part of a week. Each night the black cat visited him. It pursued him in dreams; when he woke it sat on the bedrail and jibbered at him. And Andrews jibbered back. It wasn't a real cat, he knew, but he could both hear and see it now.

On the second night he so far lost control as to fling his boot at the apparition, bringing Mrs. Thwaites scurrying down from her bedroom in alarm. After that he steeled himself to caution. He must raise no suspicion in her mind of his sanity. From then on he stalked the brute, sidling unsteadily towards it, as if unconscious of its presence, and then making a sudden grab.

And always his hands closed on—nothing.

So long as they closed on nothing he was sane—at least, only a little mad. But if ever his sense of touch betrayed him—then——

The inevitable reaction to his enforced abstinence from spirits brought his nerves to a pitiable condition. He could eat next to nothing and felt himself growing weaker. No shadow of remorse for the murder he had committed disturbed him. Why should it?

He knew now that Cavanagh was not dead, only transmuted into the body of a cat. And that cat would stay with him always, till the end. In more lucid moments he knew, of course, that all this was mere nonsense, the sick fancies of a diseased brain, and that the cat was an hallucination.

He woke on the fourth morning to a resolve. Weak and ill though he felt he would rise and go to his work.

The grey dawn light was beginning to filter through the dingy paper blinds and make dimly visible the furnishings of the room. Wearily he dragged his heavy limbs from the bed and sat down on the edge of it. Where was *it*?

His red-rimmed eyes began their customary search. There was the yellow-painted deal washstand with its ghostly white ewer and the green soap-dish. There on the other side the fireplace, its yawning mouth stopped with a coloured paper fan. His eyes travelled farther. With a start he noted the door was ajar. Even such a trifle as that made him jump. Mrs. Thwaites must have forgotten to close it last night. Beyond the door was a tall chest of drawers. In the half light he could just discern pale glints of light on the polished drawer knobs; the paler hue of the cover on its top and—something dark, a black shape on the end of that.

Of course. Of course. He knew what *that* was. He had been looking for it. He must apply the test. Not mad yet, oh no, not mad yet. It would vanish when he stretched out his hand to seize it.

He chuckled as his shaking legs moved towards it. . . .

In the kitchen below, Mrs. Thwaites paused in the act of making tea. With the teapot in her hand, she turned herself slowly about, and glancing here and there with slightly anxious eyes, muttered, " Now where on earth——"

At the dreadful cry which came from the room above, the teapot slipped from her fingers and splintered on the hearth.

She raced up the stairs.

Her daughter, wide-eyed, met her in the passage.

" Mother—Mr. Andrews? "

Mrs. Thwaites pushed her aside and thrust open Andrews' door.

"Thee run round for t'doctor, Mary," she said over her shoulder.

But her instinct told her it was already too late.

* * * * *

The modest funeral was over. Of the four mourners, one, a workmate of Andrews, had already returned to the garage, and the other, a neighbour who attended the ceremony out of curiosity, joined Mrs. Thwaites and her daughter at tea.

"And what was it he really died of?" inquired this lady over her second cup.

Mrs. Thwaites shook her head.

"The doctor called it a 'sin-cuppie,' or some such name," she answered. "But to my way o' thinkin' it were nowt no less than fright. Pore Mr. Andrews were always scared o' cats—wouldn't be in a house where one was. That was why when me sister an 'er husband—them 'at's caretakers at Portman Square flats—went off to Scarbro' and left me t'dead man's cat to mind, I had to keep it fastened up i' t'kitchen 'ere."

"You oughtn't to have done it, mother," put in Mary Thwaites. "It must have squealed through the night once, though I never heard it, for Mr. Andrews asked me about it one morning. Of course, I'd to tell him a lie."

"I know, I know," her mother replied. "I blame meself. But how was I to guess t'cat would get loose an' find its way into his room of all places?"

Her voice broke.

"An' 'im such a decent steady feller—if he did take a drop too much towards t'finish—as wouldn't harm a fly."

Public Works at Bay in the United States

By Negley Farson

THE theory of public works is at bay in the United States. There have been two huge schemes, one for $3,300,000,000 and one for $400,000,000. The first was not a success. The second was an abject failure and has been characterized as the most costly and dangerous experiment ever attempted in the United States. The country now faces another gigantic scheme for public works—to cost this time $4,800,000,000.

While what has happened in America may be no criterion for what might happen in England there are certain discoveries which it seems must be common to both experiments. At any rate, the American discoveries have been most illuminating.

It has been nearly two years now since the huge Public Works Act with its $3,300,000,000 fund, was first authorized. It had two main objectives. The first was to provide a speedy relief from dangerous unemployment. The next was to "prime the pump" of industrial recovery. It did neither. There were around ten million unemployed in the United States last spring and there are at least that number to-day. Instead of "priming the pump" the huge public works act only succeeded in thoroughly frightening private enterprise and making it unwilling to restart. It was the chief factor in producing what has now come to be known as a "strike of Capital." The political reactions have been spectacular. Last spring the President was talking of proposing an American scheme for unemployment insurance. The Republicans were getting ready to oppose it. This spring the spearhead of the Republican attack against Roosevelt and his schemes for handling the depression is a determined effort to shift the whole problem of unemployment from public works to the "dole."

The first discovery in the $3,300,000,000 scheme was that it was next to impossible to spend $3,300,000,000. There were not enough short or even long-term schemes in the country to expend it upon. For that reason it was seen almost immediately that the great Public Works Act was going to fail in its main social purpose. That was, to absorb unemployed at high speed. A year after the Act had been authorized it had been possible to put only some twenty-five per cent. of this huge fund into action. And of this over $400,000,000 had been lifted bodily out of the Public Works Act fund for another, more desperate scheme called the Civil Works Act.

The Civil Works Act arose out of the failure of the former act—the failure to put people back to work quickly—and it voluntarily abandoned practically all the restrictions which safeguarded the former act. These will be discussed later on but some idea of the character of the Civil Works Act may be imagined from the fact that this $400,000,000 was appropriated for the express purpose of putting 4,000,000 people into work *within ten days*! The result cannot be imagined. It had to be seen to be fully appreciated. Schemes had to be invented, even under the Civil Works Act, to put four million people at work. It was impossible to keep any control over such mushroom ideas, technical, financial—or moral. The State of Maryland complained that it had to " think up " a scheme at the rate of one for every twenty minutes of working time.

It is interesting to view these two acts at this time. For they were both placed under the administration of eminently honest men. And these two men—Secretary Ickes and Mr. Harry Hopkins—with their almost diametrically opposed schools of thought again represent the cleavage of opinion over the spending of the present $4,800,000,000 Work-Relief Bill.

Secretary Ickes believes in long-term schemes, such as the development of national resources, and would like to centralize such expenditure in Washington. Hopkins

wants to de-centralize, to get the money into action as quickly as possible; he would give the money to States, Cities, towns at once—and let them spend it on schools, etc., as quickly as they can.

One of the quarrels which a large section of Congress is having with the President at this moment is that he is asking for a "blank cheque" to spend nearly $5,000,000,000. He has, however, not shown the country how he intends to spend it. While this might seem a sound objection on the surface, the working of the $3,300,000,000 Act itself showed that it was an impossibility for the President or any group of men in the Administration to lay out such a schedule. Then there is the objection that if this is so the President should then intrust the spending of the $4,800,000,000 to Congress. That is a suggestion which horrifies practical politicians, for they know what would happen if some 425 legislators were left to decide how such an incredible "gift" should be divided. The California Senator would feel duty bound to declare that *his* State needed the new irrigation projects vastly more than did that waste of land New Mexico. American politicians call this "pork," and $4,800,000,000 to be quarrelled over would provide a "pork barrel" that would destroy United States legislature. The proposed compromise, which seems sensible, is that the fund should be divided. Some $2,000,000,000 should have been voted to start with, and Congress could vote the other half at the end of the year—if it considered that the first half had been spent properly.

But that in itself is an admission of the inability to work huge Public Works. It is a rebellion against mere "size." If something like $4,800,000,000 simply *has* to be voted at once the complexion of the Work-Relief Bill turns from a Public Works Act to that of a frenzied temporary relief measure.

It was the honesty of the first Public Works Act—as well as the almost bitter honesty of Secretary Ickes, its Administrator—that probably made that act a failure.

Under the PWA the government at Washington attempted to keep control of money while it was being expended. Also it wished to place the bulk of the "spending-responsibility" upon the district receiving the public works grant. The $3,300,000,000 PWA funds were authorized to be spent on a 30-70 per cent. basis. The district receiving the public works grant was to be given 30 per cent. of the total cost as an outright direct gift from Washington, and was to borrow the remaining 70 per cent. from the central government upon appropriate security.

The outstanding fault with that was that the communities most in need of unemployment relief were usually the least able to provide the security the government demanded.

Then again—and here is where the working of American public works is so illuminating—the Congressmen and local officials involved either tried to look upon the 70 per cent government loan as a slightly veiled gift from Washington, or else they tried to believe that the government would be satisfied with security much lower than that usually demanded by the bankers. Here is where the Public Works Act met its chief obstacle. This is where the undeviating honesty of its chief administrator, Mr. Harold Ickes, Secretary of the Interior, comes into play. Guardian of a programme disbursing over three billion dollars of the people's money, he demanded security that was at least equal, if not better than the bankers required. And, as far as re-absorbing unemployed was concerned, this practically killed the effectiveness of the great Public Works Act.

It is interesting to point out at this juncture that the 30-70 per cent. basis is still the method with which the government is trying to put public works funds into action. It will be particularly interesting to see how religiously this can be adhered to in the $4,800,000,000 Work-Relief Bill.

The Civil Works Act marks the second phase of the American effort to launch public works.

It was nothing less than the temporary abandonment of the most vital restriction that protected the treasury of the Public Works Act. Instead of giving thirty per cent. of the cost of a project to the community, and demanding security against a government loan for the remaining seventy per cent., the Civil Works Act tried to launch public works on an outright 100 per cent. government-grant. Not much need be said about it here, except that all forms of political corruption immediately came into play. The Act actually failed because from its very birth it was a mathematical impossibility. It began and died in the Autumn of 1933.

The reason why the Civil Works Act was an impossibility from its inception was due to a factor common to both Public Works Acts. This was the minimum wage rate that had been established throughout the United States. These wage rates in reality came out of the effort to establish what wages should be paid during the expenditure of the $3,300,000,000 of the first Act. They were not in the original draft of the Public Works Act as it was presented to Congress. Secretary Ickes wrote them in after the Act had been passed. And, while it might not have been seen at the outset, once they had been passed they automatically established themselves as the minimum rate of payment for labour for *all* public works or relief work throughout the United States. Ickes divided the entire United States into three zones for which he arbitrarily established the minimum rates—

Zone.	Rate per hour for Common labour.	Skilled labour.
Southern	40 cents	$1·00
Middle	45 „	$1·10
Northern	50 „	$1·20

These rates experts declared to be out of touch with realities. It had been forty years since a common

labourer in the Southern States had been getting 40 cents an hour. Negroes were accustomed to getting 10-12-14 cents; white men were getting from 25 cents to 30 cents.

Under this rigid fixed rate of minimum wages Southern communities saw their wage bill being almost doubled. Workers also saw the possibilities. Negroes and white labourers who had been accustomed to work happily on from $5 to $10 a week threw up their jobs. They refused to continue working for private or local civic enterprise when they could get a good assured $12 a week from the blessed government.

This wholesale desertion of private enterprise so alarmed some States that they actually refused to have public works. The States of North Carolina, Virginia and Florida held out for months, refusing to raise their wage scales in order to make themselves eligible for public works grants. The State of Maryland actually asked permission to rescind its former acceptance of a $650,000 waterworks project under the Public Works Act. Other States in the "deep South," it was shown, got around this difficulty by gratefully accepting the government money grant, to be expended on the minimum 40-cents-per-hour basis—and paid the negroes 40 cents a day. They pocketed the rest of it.

The fixed minimum wage rate wrecked the Civil Works Act at birth. $400,000,000 was bodily appropriated to put 4,000,000 people into work. That meant $100 per person. The Civil Works Act programme called for eleven weeks' work. Yet, at $12 weekly, which was the lowest wage that could be paid to even a negro in the South, $100 meant only slightly over eight weeks' pay. Therefore, without paying a cent for material and using even the lowest form of labour, the Civil Works Act was a mathematical impossibility from the start.

This government-established wage rate seriously affected all American relief measures, even to the casual relief on work given to local unemployed. It has an interesting bearing on the latest developments of the

effort to launch public works in the United States. One of the first obstacles which met the President's present $4,800,000,000 bill was that he wanted to be able to pay *less* than the prevailing rate of wages. He had been warned by the bitter experience of the Public Works and the Civil Works Acts. But now at this juncture the American Federation of Labour takes a hand. The A.F. of L. is insisting that the *full rate* of prevailing wages must be paid for all public works. It is not, it asserted, going to have the employed American worker forced to compete with cheap government-subsidised labour on public works jobs. Labour dreads the swing of the pendulum. And it is an important thing to note that it was an unexpected and suddenly full-grown "lobby" of the A.F. of L. in Washington that is credited with persuading the Senate to reject Roosevelt's demand for the right to pay lower wages.

The Republicans fell in line and supported the A.F. of L. demand for full wages because it saw in this a major point to wreck the huge $4,800,000,000 Work-Relief Act and shift the unemployed over on to a "dole" system.

The President has won the first round with the Senate on the wages clause. He won by compromise. The Senate revoked its amendment in favour of a new ruling by which the President agrees to pay the prevailing rate of wages to men engaged on "permanent public buildings" which form part of the Work Relief public works—but he is allowed to use his discretion regarding lower wages on all other relief work. This is a vague formula which allowed the President to get his bill (that part of it at least) past the Senate. But it will not satisfy the American Federation of Labour. This discretionary or "security wage" which the President is allowed to pay for other work will have a depressing effect upon wages throughout the United States. The President is allowed to raise it if he sees the "security

wage" is having such an effect. But it is not seen yet how it is possible to gauge such an effect—nor is there any machinery in the Bill by which such a wage-rise could be made.

Summing up, the first Public Works Act, in its original form—before the minimum wage rates were inserted—is considered by relief administrators about as close as one can get to the normal operations of private enterprise. Under the 70 per cent. loan to the local recipient it tends to make local authorities responsible not only for raising the money, but, what is vastly more important, *for spending the money*. As the work is let out to local contractors they have normal supervision over their labour efficiency. They can discharge a man for slack work.

But it is slow. The communities most needing public works to relieve unemployment are usually the least able to raise their share of the money which is necessary to finance them. It raises the price for both labour and raw materials. Finally, it tends to stave off enterprise, still the backbone of the American system, and therefore defers the return to normal conditions. Once embedded in the American body it will be difficult to remove, especially if any long growth is permitted. These critics, therefore, instead of long-term extensive planning, which on the face of it would seem theoretically best for large public works schemes, now favour placing contracts for as small time-blocks as possible.

The Civil Works Act they unanimously reject as an experiment too dangerous ever to be repeated—not that that means that it won't be. Under the 100 per cent. government grant responsibility for spending the money is entirely absolved from the responsibility of raising it. There can be no adequate control. It demoralises local official morals and militates against local enterprise which quite obviously will not burden local rates with any project it can hope to get financed by a benevolent central government.

Work relief, or the employment of casual labour under a local relief board, is nothing less than an emotional cloak for the "dole." It does not build up character and must be regarded as a subterfuge.

Direct relief—even without a balancing unemployment insurance scheme—does not stand in the way of private enterprise. It is more cruel, because it is vital that the rate of benefit allowed to any recipient should be sufficiently low to make him eager to find regular normal employment. It is cheaper. While no concrete figures have yet been given out for the cost of putting a man back to work under public works schemes in America we have the English example.

A Countryman's Diary

By A. G. Street (Author of "Farmer's Glory")

February 14th.

TO-DAY has been a lovely day. The magic of it crept through the open window of my study, telling me that Spring was waiting outside. I leaned out of the window merely intending to take just one peep at her before I settled down to work, but it was the old story, the woman tempted me. So I played truant and went outside to walk in a morning which was all warm and February. Wiltshire and her inhabitants were in such a sunny humour, that I exulted with them at the coming of Spring. I did not attempt to reckon up how many more Springs I might be permitted to see. Sufficient for the day was the glory thereof. So sufficient that I gave thanks for having been allowed to live to see it. And now, this evening when it is raining hard, the bounty of this morning is still fresh in my mind—the loveliest morning in all the world, an English morning, all warm and February.

February 17th.

I knew it would happen, and it has. This morning I hired a horse from a riding-school and went riding with my daughter; without exception, the bravest thing I have ever done. My household did not appreciate my courage, but cheered in derision when I climbed awkwardly into the saddle. For the first thirty seconds I felt horrible, but when we got going I began to enjoy myself. How I enjoyed that ride, and the added respect from my daughter which increased with every yard we travelled! Granted, there was nothing showy about my riding. I was modesty itself. Any showing off, I thought, will be done by the old horse, but not if I can prevent it. So I watched him carefully all the way in case he should take it into his head to revert to

childish practices. But I need not have worried. He realized from the start that he was carrying very precious freight, and behaved like the gentleman he looked. But now the die is cast. I must get myself a quiet—lots of emphasis on the quiet—hack.

February 19th.

Now that every shade of agricultural opinion in this country is " on the huckle " to the effect that the main branch of our farming industry, livestock, must be put into a more prosperous condition, much was expected concerning beef. To-day the papers reported that the existing subsidy was to be extended for three months, while the negotiations with the Dominions and foreign importers continue. Then, one imagines, we shall hear something definite concerning the long-awaited long term policy. Well, the powers that be can still further delay doing something sensible about livestock, and meantime they can fiddle with quotas and subsidies, or talk till they are black in the face; but, until they choose which products of our farming are to be produced to the fullest capacity of our farmers' land, capital, brains, and brawn, they might just as well play marbles for all the good they will do, either to the farming industry or to the unemployment problem. Even in connection with this temporary subsidy on beef the Minister of Agriculture stated that it was not to be granted " with a view to stimulating an artificial expansion of livestock production in this country." The same old cry—restriction, restriction, restriction. Restriction on beef, on wheat, on hops, on potatoes, hints of restriction on milk and all sorts of things. " Where in the b—— h—— can we go full speed ahead ? Our profits have been so restricted that they are non-existent, but surely they might let us farm as well as we can," said one irate farmer to me to-day, and I must admit that he had reason. For an island country like ours to restrict the production from its own

inadequate acreage of farming land and at the same time to import millions of pounds' worth of farming products every year is, as my friend put it, " Not only b—— silly, but b—— wicked."

February 20th.

In connection with the debate on the beef subsidy I see that great use was made of that blessed word " insulate." Well, if the country will stand for it, such a policy could enable farmers to make profits, but it should be remembered that, while it was fairly easy to insulate our wheat production, to pursue the same policy for a thing like livestock, twenty-five times larger in pounds sterling per annum than wheat, is going to be an expensive business. Besides, it is treating farmers like spoilt children. To sell one's wheat for forty-five shillings through this type of policy and buy similar wheat at half the price with which to feed one's hens may be profitable to the farmer, but no one, not even the recipient of such a dole, can feel proud at taking it. Other industries have been granted tariffs on their selling products. Why should not farming receive similar treatment ? Protection given in this way to the industry on its main selling lines only, sufficient to enable the efficient farmer to face overseas competition and insufficient to bolster up the inefficient farmer, would soon transform our countryside, and set thousands of unemployed to work. Restriction of production, quotas, voluntary agreements, and subsidies are a policy of funk. They achieve nothing worth while, they annoy our town consumers and taxpayers, and they are an insult to every self-respecting farmer in the country. Our administrators have been playing about with these useless nostrums for three years now, and as a result our livestock industry, by far the major part of our farming, is in a worse state than when they began. One begins to wonder whether the present government does desire a

more prosperous home agriculture, and to suspect that this country's overseas investments are calling the tune.

February 26th.

Phew! What a burst of bad temper in the previous two entries in this diary! But on reading them through this evening I do not want to rub out one word. Restriction of production in a small thickly-populated country like ours! How can any man continue farming well and trying to employ more men while our administrators have that bee in their bonnets? Still, let us turn to something cheerful for a change. Yesterday my wife and I attended the Annual Dinner of the Society of Wiltshiremen in London. A thoroughly jolly evening where everyone present seemed to be agreed that Wiltshire's greatest charm was its spacious rolling landscape which had not yet been spoiled by modern civilization.

March 4th.

As a change from the usual grousing of farmers it was very pleasant to-day to have a conversation with a young farmer who seemed quite satisfied with life. The reason was that both he and his wife had practised those two rather old-fashioned virtues, hard work and thrift. They started together living in a small hut on the downs, and had then progressed by easy stages to better and better cottages and finally to a large farmhouse. To-day their example cannot be too strongly stressed to any young people beginning in farming. Start in a cottage and there is a good chance that you will finish in the manor house. Start in the manor house and almost certainly you will finish in the workhouse. The number of comparatively young farmers who should trace their failure to the latter cause is legion. The small amount of capital required to stock a farm nowadays does not warrant the young farmer living in a house which requires

an income of at least a thousand a year to keep it up decently. In other words, the beginner in farming should cut his personal coat according to the cloth at his disposal.

March 6th.

A few days ago I agreed to take two old hunters for their keep, and this evening they arrived. My pupil's eyes sparkled when he saw them, but mine, or rather the rear portions of my anatomy, were filled with apprehension. To-morrow I shall be for it.

March 9th.

"The best thing for the inside of a man is the outside of a horse." I do not know who wrote those words, but, while I will admit their truth, how I would like to meet him. Thank Heaven that to-day the ground was too hard for further torture. Never have I welcomed frost so gladly.

March 10th.

The frost has gone, but the east wind, ugh! Still, it was needed to dry up the sodden fallows which February left behind. To-morrow it should be dry enough on the pastures for an old car to haul a manure distributor. Or so its owner thinks, for he rang me up to-day to say that he would begin this job in the morning.

March 15th.

Farming's Spring offensive is well under way, most of the units engaged being mechanized. To-day the whole countryside was busy cultivating, sowing, harrowing, and rolling, but horses were few and far between. Mechanization has relieved the farm labourer of much back-aching toil during recent years, but no one can describe driving a car or tractor over the open fields in this east wind as a cushy job. And here I would like to

pay a well-merited tribute to the British farm labourer for the admirable way in which he has learned to handle modern machinery in all sorts of weathers. A carter can plough and an engineer can run a tractor, but the man who can do both is a better man than either. In Wiltshire there are many men who can perform this dual rôle. May the wind soon change from east to west and so make their lot this March a trifle easier.

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Foreign Affairs

By Sir Charles Petrie

THE events of the past few weeks have left the intelligent reader of even the more reputable newspapers quite at sea as to what is really happening in the field of international politics. There have been so many Pacts and rumours of Pacts, and such coming and going of European statesmen, that this bewilderment is only natural. Nevertheless, the key to the enigma is not difficult to find, for it lies in the fact that the immediate post-war system has broken down, and that the nations are feverishly seeking for something to put in its place before disaster overtakes them. To close observers, of course, it has been obvious for some time that the system was collapsing, but the truth was hidden from the outside world. Now it has been revealed in all its nakedness.

That system was the domination of the Continent by France and her allies, Poland and the Little Entente, with the tacit consent of Great Britain. It was based upon the Treaty of Versailles and the other Peace Treaties, and upon the subordination of Germany. The rise of Italy under Signor Mussolini subjected it to an increasing strain, but what finally broke it was the Nazi accession to power. To-day Berlin and Warsaw are close friends; France is on her knees to Italy; the Little Entente is suspicious of its own shadow; and the British Government pursues a different policy every two or three weeks. Whether the old system was good or bad is beside the point: it is in pieces, and cannot be put together again. The problem is, by what can it be replaced.

The Alternatives

THE French proposal is naturally designed to perpetuate the hegemony of France, if in a revised form. The traditional policy of seeking an ally in the rear of Germany has not been abandoned, and Russia is

to take the place lately occupied by Poland. In the place, however, of unilateral alliances of the old type there are to be collective agreements, which shall have for their object the maintenance of the *status quo*. This will, it is hoped in Paris, counteract the renewed strength of Germany by making it certain that any act of aggression on her part will array all Europe in arms against her. It is also a confession of inferiority on the part of France.

Italy is interested in the problem to the extent that she is determined at all costs to avoid having a common frontier with Germany. If she can obtain the support of other Powers for the defence of Austrian independence, so much the better; if not, then she will look to it single-handed. That is why the restoration of the Archduke Otto meets with more support in Rome than in any other capital. It must be the Habsburgs or the *Anschluss:* everything else is an intrigue; and Signor Mussolini realizes that. For the rest, he believes that a permanent settlement is only possible on the basis of the Four Power Pact, but Germany must abstain from interference in Austria before her relations with Italy can regain their old cordiality.

The German Attitude

HERR HITLER has not, at the moment of writing, publicly shown his hand, save in the matter of the re-introduction of conscription, which is only important as official admission of a self-evident fact. Yet there can be little doubt as to his general attitude. He will not enter into any agreement, such as the Eastern Pact, which commits Germany to go to war other than on her own initiative, and he demands for her armaments commensurate with her responsibilities. At the same time he is said to be prepared to conclude Pacts of non-aggression with all Germany's neighbours individually, and he is credited with a willingness to agree to the abolition of bombing planes. It would not be surprising, too, if Germany expressed her readiness to return to Geneva,

provided that a previous assurance was forthcoming that Article XIX of the Covenant (which provides for the revision of obsolete treaties) would be put into operation.

It must not be forgotten that Nazi Germany fears two things: encirclement and Russia; and the Eastern Pact seems to her to be a combination of both. On the other hand, there is considerable difference of opinion in official circles with regard to Russia. To the Nazis she is anathema, but the military party still hope that one day they may be able to use her for their own ends, and they have no desire to repeat the costly blunders of Charles XII and Napoleon. It is generally understood that Dr. Rosenberg, one of the leading Russophobes and "Easterners," has recently strengthened his position in the Führer's counsels, and the consequences of this are likely to make themselves felt before long.

The Position of Great Britain

THIS is the moment chosen by the British Government to throw a monkey-wrench into the machinery of European diplomacy by the special allusion to Germany in the White Paper accompanying the Army Estimates. Of course Germany is re-arming; but what of the armaments of Russia, that new-found friend of the National Government? There had been for several weeks so marked an improvement in the attitude of Mr. MacDonald and his colleagues towards international problems that one hoped they had definitely turned over a new leaf, but this latest *gaffe* reveals them at their old bad worst. Indeed, it is doubtful how much longer those of us who wish for real peace can continue to support the National Government, not, as the Socialists would have it, on account of its bellicosity, but because of its incompetence.

The plain fact is that if we are not very careful we shall find ourselves committed to some form of anti-German action under the projected Eastern Pact. This country has neither the means nor the intention of

fighting in such a quarrel, and the Government would do well to realize the growing unpopularity among large sections of public opinion of its flirtations with Moscow. We are not the policemen of the world. By all means let us do everything in our power to prevent an outbreak of war in Western Europe, for if it does break out we shall inevitably be involved; but the way to effect this is not by gratuitous interference in quarrels in Eastern Europe which are no concern of ours. One cannot be too thankful that it was the Lord Privy Seal, not the Foreign Secretary, who was selected for the visit to Moscow.

Sir John Simon

IT would be interesting to know what precedent, if any, there is for a British Foreign Secretary delivering a lecture in a foreign capital as part of the publicity stunt of a newspaper. One does not criticize, but rather congratulates, the *Temps*, for securing Sir John Simon for this purpose, but that in no way affects the question whether it was quite fitting for him to accept. He chose as his theme the British Constitution, and his address, to quote M. Pierre Gaxotte in *Je Suis Partout*, "*à vrai dire, ne contenait rien qu'on ne sût déjà.*"

That Sir John was boring goes without saying, and no doubt his auditors would have appreciated his remarks more had he dwelt at greater length on the question of the responsibility of ministers in Great Britain. Some personal reminiscences of the early days of August, 1914, or of the Military Service Bill in January, 1916, would have added piquancy to the discourse.

If the acceptance of such an invitation was undignified, the subject of it was tactless. France is at the present time a prey to violent controversy as to the merits and demerits of Parliamentary Government, and in the midst of it a foreign statesman intervenes with an address of this nature. One wonders what the attitude of the British Government would be if M. Litvinoff gave a

lecture in London on Bolshevism under the auspices of *The Daily Worker*. It is difficult not to sympathize with those who interrupted the right honourable gentleman.

The Greek Revolt

A FEW months ago it was suggested in these pages that the time had come to de-bunk M. Venizelos, but he has now performed that service for himself. Having lost the last elections, and seeing all prospect of return to power fading into the distance, he has deliberately brought upon his country all the horrors of civil war for no other purpose save that of installing himself in office against the expressed wishes of the Greek people. Of course this is by no means the first time that he has acted in such a manner, but on previous occasions he has been able to cloak his personal ends with some patriotic camouflage. Now the world knows the type of man he really is.

The Greek revolt is on exactly the same footing as the rising in Spain last October. In both cases those who never tired of expressing their devotion to Liberalism and Democracy, having been defeated at the polls, had recourse to arms to reverse the verdict of the ballot-box. We now know exactly how much reliance is to be placed upon those parties of the Left who, all over Europe, are protesting that liberty is safe in their hands alone. If the electors will vote for a Venizelos or an Azaña they may go on voting; if they cease to do so, the machine-gun is at once invoked. M. Venizelos is to be thanked for letting us know where we stand.

The Only Solution

M. TSALDARIS has only himself to thank for much of what has happened. He has called himself a Royalist all his life, and his plain duty was to restore the monarchy as soon as he was in power. As in Austria, the Right is not likely to wax enthusiastic about a government of crypto-monarchists that will not recall

the monarch. It is, therefore, to be hoped that M. Tsaldaris will take to heart the lesson of this latest revolt, which is that he cannot any longer continue to make the best of both worlds, Royalist and Venizelist.

Unless Greece is to descend to the level of a second-rate South American republic there is no solution except the speedy return of King George II to the throne. Centrifugal influences have always been exceptionally strong in that country, and only the monarchy can control them. Furthermore, the King is now a man of wide experience, and his family connections, not least with Great Britain, would ensure for Greece that foreign support which in her exposed position she so greatly needs. The ancient Greeks taught political science to mankind, and it will be interesting to see if their descendants still remember enough of it to-day to take the only course that can bring them peace and prosperity, namely the return of the monarchy.

The Far East

IT is more than a little unfortunate that the policy which Great Britain should adopt in the Far East has become a subject of controversy in the Press and on the platform. It is still more unfortunate that much of this controversy should be marked by prejudice rather than by knowledge. In the past it used to be a reproach to the Right that it refused to recognize the present, and was determined at all costs to put back the clock. In respect of the Far East precisely the same charge, but with much greater truth, can to-day be brought against Liberals and Socialists, whose one desire is to ignore the fact that China has become a mere geographical expression and that Japan is mistress of the situation.

It is quite useless to proceed on the assumption that the Chinese Humpty-Dumpty can be put together again, at any rate for some considerable period. The League acted on this false premise, and did serious damage to China and its own prestige in the process. Europe then

declared that it would have nothing to do with Manchukuo as the latter was a mere Japanese puppet-state. This did not have the intended effect of precipitating the collapse of Manchukuo, but caused the latter to become what the Powers feared. Had the new empire received the recognition and support of the rest of the world, it would not have been so easy for Japan to secure predominance there. If it be argued that Manchukuo acquired independence from China in dubious circumstances, the answer is that so did Panama from Colombia, but she is recognized all the same.

Japan and Ourselves

IT is quite idle to talk about threatening Japan. With all her other commitments Great Britain cannot afford a fleet in the Far East comparable with the Japanese, and an alliance with the United States is impossible, even if it were desirable. Such being the case, surely the only wise policy is to work in with Japan, having first of all discovered exactly what it is she wants. At the present time the British Government is pursuing a "willing to wound yet afraid to strike" policy, which may one day result in us being cleared out of the Far East altogether.

Is a Japanese Monroe Policy not a possible solution? It was envisaged by the late Theodore Roosevelt at the close of the Russo-Japanese War. Of course Russia would not like it, but the object of British statesmanship is not, or should not be, to pull Soviet chestnuts out of the fire. Japan wants a friend at the present time, and now is the opportunity for Great Britain to fulfil that role. If we hesitate, there is always Germany, with all that implies both in Asia and in Europe.

General Smuts Answered

THE impudent statements of General Smuts concerning foreign policy, to which attention was called in the ENGLISH REVIEW last month, have not gone long

unanswered. On February 19th the Prime Minister of New Zealand said, in reference to the proposed Air Pact, that although the Dominions were not a party to it, as they had not been parties to Locarno, yet if it came into force, and the guarantees ever had to be applied, it was no use blinking the fact that if Great Britain became involved in war, New Zealand would also be involved. This was not only the case because of the legal position, but because sentiment in the Dominion would insist on their standing shoulder to shoulder with Great Britain in such circumstances. Even apart from all this, any catastrophe affecting Britain must affect New Zealand, which was bound up with the welfare of the Old Country.

It is a curious commentary on the British Press that so little prominence should have been given to the speech of the Prime Minister of New Zealand, and so much to that of General Smuts.

The Spanish Situation

A CORRESPONDENT who has just returned from a tour through Spain sends me the following notes on the actual situation in that country after the abortive revolution in October: "The Lerroux Government is taking no chances. It is not disposed to rescind the state of alarm which was renewed for another month from February 23rd, though Señor Lerroux sees no reason why it should not cease in some provinces where there is evidence of something like static tranquillity. Meanwhile the precautions taken when the revolutionaries showed their hand still exist. The state of war still applies to some provinces; the newspapers are still under the censor; armed Civil Guards are on every train; Guards of Assault, the force of 50,000 men created after the fall of the monarchy, are on duty at the banks and public institutions."

"The ravages of the revolution will not be made good for a long time. Greatly worried by the accounts of the revolt published abroad—these were held to be

much exaggerated—the Government has given to the world an official record of the tragic happenings. The killed, including members of the Government forces and civilians, is put at 1,377 and the wounded at 2,954. The courts sentenced 50 persons to death, but only two, criminals both, were executed. 'Never has the world known so striking an example of benignity,' was the official report. In dealing with the convicted rebels the 'liberal and democratic Government' takes credit in defending civilization and democracy."

Government and Opposition

"THE Socialists who began the revolt are in no wise grateful for the clemency exercised towards the rebels. They were crushed by the Government forces, but they are not by any means cowed. They still hope to obtain power and domination. The revolution did not clarify the political and parliamentary situation. Señor Lerroux still experiences difficulty in maintaining his majority in the Cortes. Skilful politician though he is he finds it necessary to deal gently and tactfully with Señor Gil Robles, leader of *Acción Popular*, on whose representatives in the Cortes he depends for carrying on the Government. Señor Gil Robles, champion of the Catholics and agrarians, holds the key of the situation. But even his position is not at all clear. The monarchists among his followers find it impossible to mix Republicanism with Catholicism."

"More light should be thrown on the actual feeling in Spain when the result of the municipal elections, due to take place in April, is known. We shall then know more accurately how things stand—whether the chances of Robles assuming power to which he aspires are improved, whether the intensive propaganda of *Renovación Española*, the monarchist organisation, has borne fruit. In the meantime a military dictatorship is prophesied by those who favour it, but not before 1936. The alternative is a strong cohesive Government which

Spain does not possess and which, amid the present confusion of parties, she may find it extremely difficult to obtain."

Feeling in Catalonia

"THE fact that a state of war still exists in Catalonia presupposes that the revolution in that province is not yet at an end. Catalonia has lost practically all the autonomy granted to it. The province is compelled to wear the mantle of disgrace. Señor Companys, the former president, and all his councillors are still in prison, though the mayor of Barcelona and those who assisted him to govern the city have been released. The Madrid Government exercised great care in appointing a provisional mayor of Barcelona. He belongs to a party which polled only 20,000 votes at the last municipal elections. The ringleaders of the Catalonia revolt have been lightly dealt with. The death sentence passed on a colonel and two captains was commuted to imprisonment for life."

"The province is now living under what is called a government of transition. Catalonians are wondering how this will end. Will their suspended privileges be restored in time? At the moment nothing can be said on this point. What can be said is that the Madrid Government is showing a firm hand. It can also be stated that in the whole of Catalonia, notwithstanding the ghastly failure of the *coup* of Señor Companys, the feeling for autonomy is as strong as ever. For the present, however, or for the immediate future, it cannot be a question of asserting, even in a mild fashion, claims to Catalonian independence. Governmental force is everywhere apparent in Barcelona."

LITERARY SUPPLEMENT

Edited by **HUGH KINGSMILL**

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Literary Notes

By Hugh Kingsmill

John Clare

MR. J. W. TIBBLE is to be congratulated on his exhaustive edition of the poems of John Clare, in two volumes of over five hundred pages each (Dent, 25s.). Clare was born in 1793, the son of a labourer, and died in Northampton lunatic asylum in 1864. The criticism which Keats passed on one of Clare's early poems—"The Description too much prevailed over the Sentiment"—applies to the whole of Clare's work, with the exception of the famous sonnet "I Am . . ." and an occasional stanza written, like this sonnet, after he had lost his reason. The following quatrain, for example, has a poignancy, derived from his longing for his youth and

freedom, which the poems he wrote when young and free do not show—

> The rabbits from the furze would squat and run;
> The daisies filling every open space
> And crowds of kingcups golden in the sun
> Shone on the mole-hills of that happy place.

The version of "I Am . . ." given by Mr. Tibble omits a line which to some readers may appear the most beautiful and characteristic line Clare wrote. Mr. Tibble's version runs—

> " . . . And sleep as I in childhood sweetly slept:
> Untroubling and untroubled where I lie . . ."

The alternative reading is—

> " And sleep as I in childhood sweetly slept:
> Full of high thoughts unborn. So let me lie . . ."

Mr. Middleton Murry

"BETWEEN Two Worlds" (Jonathan Cape, 10s. 6d.) is the first volume of Mr. Murry's autobiography and brings the story of his life down to the end of the war. The two worlds of the title are explained in the last sentence of the book: "In the world of vision I was at home because I was not; in the world of act and suffering, of love and friendship, I was, and was in anguish or insentience." In simpler language, Mr. Murry has never succeeded in harmonizing his aspirations and his conduct, but has always consoled himself for feeble or selfish conduct by retreating into a world of fine sentiments. Throughout this book Mr. Murry is to be seen evading every test of character with an unobtrusive adroitness which he disguises both from himself and his more ardent admirers by a fog of words, through which the figure of Mr. Murry is to be dimly discerned, bowed with a great weariness at the necessity of leaving it to someone else to carry the baby. When he cuts loose from a girl who had hoped to marry him, he is "frayed to shreds" by his love for her. When Katherine Mansfield becomes consumptive and turns to him for support

against the fear of death, he finds that it would be treachery to his sense of reality to give her the comfort she craves. During the war he is "caught in the machine," that is, he gets a job in Whitehall, where he "passes into a quite mysterious state of unawareness," from which he emerges to learn that his salary has doubled itself during his coma. As soon as the war is over, he notices that his friends have been killed in it, and decides that he has been spared "to experience, in full consciousness, the *meaning* of their disaster."

That Mr. Murry is capable of producing good work, few who have followed his strange career will dispute. But he will not use his gifts to any literary advantage until he ceases to dramatize himself for the benefit of his less intelligent admirers.

Lord Birkenhead

IN "Frederick, Earl of Birkenhead: The Last Phase:" (Thornton Butterworth, 21s.) the second Lord Birkenhead completes the narrative of his father's life. Filial piety and other disqualifications have prevented the author from writing a book which will preserve the memory of his father for posterity, but he has collected much interesting material which a writer with insight could transform into a permanently valuable picture of a remarkable man. How little the second Lord Birkenhead has profited by his study of his father's life and character appears in his style, which is as pompous and consequential as his father's. If he wishes to do justice to his considerable ability, he should try to realize that self-assertion is not a sign of self-confidence, and that insolence proceeds not from self-respect but from a desire to forestall criticism.

The first Lord Birkenhead had just enough genius to make him dissatisfied with himself, but not enough to force him to harmonize his gifts. He remained throughout his life a brilliant undergraduate, and even the flashes of mature wisdom with which he used to astonish the world

had the air of being assumed to disconcert the dons. It is difficult, for example, to believe that when he rebuked the bishops for attaching too much importance to the physical side of marriage, and called on them to remember its spiritual aspect, he was as deeply pained by their grossness as his words seemed to suggest.

The tragedy of Birkenhead's life was that he despised the career of a democratic statesman, but did not despise the rewards offered by a democracy to its ablest members.

Matthew Arnold and Marguerite

IN "Matthew Arnold and France" (Cambridge University Press, 12s. 6d.) Mrs. Sells has traced with great care the influence on Arnold of Senancour, Alfred de Vigny and other French writers of the Romantic movement. She has also given a charming picture of Thun in the thirties and forties of the last century, thus framing the Marguerite of Arnold's poetry in the setting where Arnold met and loved her. Earlier attempts to show that Marguerite was a real person have met with a stout resistance, especially in academic circles, but Mrs. Sells has made Marguerite safe for North Oxford by picturing her as an aristocratic French maiden, who, when Arnold knew her, was "young, and unsophisticated." Mrs. Sells does not quote Arnold's lament that Marguerite had clasped others before him to her breast, or his speculation, some years later, on the likelihood that Marguerite had "flitted down the flowery track, Where feet like thine too lightly come." Possibly these indications that Marguerite was not unsophisticated escaped Mrs. Sells, whose strong point is not a sense of reality, for she approves, as the practical thing to have done in the circumstances, Senancour's hurling of himself into a mountain torrent in order to escape the hardships of a night in the open. One is not surprised to learn that Senancour never recovered from this ill-considered move. One's only surprise is that there was anything of him left to go into a slow decline.

The Romance of Mountaineering

MOUNTAINEERING was discovered by the Victorian upper-middle class in their search for adventure without bloodshed and beauty without sex. Since the war it has spread all over Europe, and is said to be no longer so sure a prophylactic against sex as the Victorians found it. In "The Romance of Mountaineering" (J. M. Dent, 18s., 41 collotype reproductions, and maps and diagrams) Mr. R. L. G. Irving deals both with the history and practice of mountaineering. His style when he tries to express emotion is rather mannered. He speaks of "the great heritage of adventure and enjoyment," of "potent charms in rock and snow," and of "a treasure that enriched the whole manner of their lives." But his analysis of the morbid element in mountaineering is both acute and profound—"Fear is one of the strongest of all the emotions, and when the loss of faith and ideals has left as mere blocks of matter things in which a spirit lived before, emotional excitement is more eagerly sought after than ever, and a mind inclined towards introspection can find in fear an excitement that stimulates it like a drug."

Beachcomber

"STUFF and Nonsense" (Jonathan Cape, 7s. 6d. Illustrated by Nicolas Bentley) is the third volume of selections from Beachcomber's humorous column in the *Daily Express*. Beachcomber hates modern novelists, film stars, motor-cars, Wordsworth and pacifism, and loves Poland, Hilaire Belloc, and the Irish Free State. When he gets away from his loves and hates, he shows a real genius for pure nonsense. Here are two examples: "Every decent man carries a pencil behind his ear, to write down the price of fish." "Ruskin used to lie on his bed and raise his legs in the air. Then his man, standing on the bed, used to more or less pour the trousers over his legs. Sometimes they fell too swiftly, and got muddled into a heap above the knee. But it was all one to jolly Jack Ruskin."

A Correction

In the February number, Mr. L. E. Holman's " Life of Francis Maria Kelly " (Methuen, 6s.) was inadvertently reviewed as by Miss Holman.

A New Epigrammatist

" BRIEF WORDS." 100 Epigrams by WILLIAM SOUTAR. (The Moray Press, Edinburgh and London. 2s. 6d.)

TURNING on the wireless the other evening, I came in for the opening part of a lecture. The speaker, it appeared, had attained the age of twenty-eight. By profession a navvy, public relief had made it possible for him to study in " circulating libraries," and to this mental enrichment he owed that fundamental grasp of life's realities which authorised him to address us. " As for the modern poets, I don't read them," said he, " for I don't understand them—neurotics ! " His self-assurance was so sublime as to be almost impressive, but as a modern poet myself, my anguish was diminished when I realised the scope of his attack. The older poets were likewise unintelligible, and he avoided reading them also. In music, he informed us with oracular gravity, he preferred " Jazz " to Beethoven. Even this democratic critic would find it difficult to detect any quality verging upon the neurotic in Mr. Soutar's verse, while those who suppose that a modern poet will necessarily make havoc of metre will discover with pleasure that this one is possessed of a classically perfect technique. And he can be witty, or poetic, or both together, according to his feelings at the moment. This is his epitaph upon the Muse of a poetaster who wrote upon lavender-scented paper—

> **Here, in this aromatic bed,**
> **His muse, grown sickly, hid her head :**
> **And being modest, it was meet**
> **That none should turn a single sheet.**

And this upon a spiritist—

> **This cultur'd man, when dying, made the boast**
> **That he would be death's emissary ghost;**
> **But the bold voice which spoke, as from the dead,**
> **Prov'd a sententious bore had come instead.**

And here is a conceit that would have delighted Herrick—

> Upon my five-wired fence the blackbirds sit
> Making a live and lyric stave of it.

Wit and irony make us smile; humour makes us laugh, and it is as a humorist that Mr. Soutar dedicates a quatrain to that eminently caledonian bird who mastered all the law and the prophets—the ostrich who swallowed an Old Testament in the Edinburgh Zoo. Great poets usually owe their pre-eminence in part to their mastery over words, in part to other qualities. The technique of Burns, for instance, was indifferent; his construction sometimes illogical; his rhymes often mere assonances. Wherein then lies his appeal? I fancy in sheer greatness of soul. Burns had something worth expressing, and that was Burns. Mr. Soutar, his fellow countryman, has to my mind, when at his best, much of the earlier poet's lofty quality.

> Life as a flame goes up, nor can it stay;
> And all the earth is fuel for life's lust:
> Yet there is triumph in the mortal trust—
> To be a brand that burns itself away.

This too is noble; for a sundial—

> Hold not the hour,
> Loving what you have lost;
> Only the gifted hour can be your guest:
> Gladly accept the flower and the frost:
> The sun goes down and shadows are at rest.

If the sonnet be a "scanty plot of ground," the epigram is scantier, but upon Lilliputian allotments, Mr. Soutar astonishes one with the variety of his gay or lovely blossoms.

KENNETH HARE.

Sex and Culture

SEX-CULTURE. By J. D. UNWIN. (Oxford University Press. 36s. net.)

BRIEFLY, this very able book was written to prove that culture is in inverse ratio to sexual freedom. Plausible as the theory is, and often as it must have occurred to the historian with a certain sex-phobic bias, yet even under Dr. Unwin's admittedly scholarly treatment it remains unconvincing. It is a great pity that Dr. Unwin could not include Egypt (the source of all culture, according to some) among the civilized nations he analyses. It is also a pity that he omits to discuss the action of

inbreeding in superior stocks upon culture. For, seeing that all the leading cultures of the world have arisen among superior human stocks in islands, peninsulas or artificially enclosed areas, in which inbreeding was forced upon the inhabitants, this point is extremely important. But one of the chief difficulties (and there are many) lies in the relation between the three factors, human energy, free sex-expression, and culture. Assuming, as Dr. Unwin does, that there is some unexplained dynamic power in the sexual impulse, he may legitimately argue that if we dam up this energy by restricting sexual freedom, it will burst into other channels and produce culture among other aberrations. But when Dr. Unwin dilates on this he reveals one of the weaknesses of his thesis. Thus he writes: "If a vigorous society wishes to display its productive energy for a long time, and even for ever, it must recreate itself, first, by placing the sexes on a level of complete legal equality, and then by altering its economic and social organization in such a way as to render it both possible and tolerable for sexual opportunity to remain at a minimum for an extended period, and even for ever." But we possess very convincing evidence pointing to the fact that the restriction of sexual freedom leads to a decline in the sexual impulse itself —the very source of Dr. Unwin's necessary springs of culture. So that what happens if free sex-expression declines, as it certainly has declined in Anglo-Saxon middle class life for at least four generations, is not an accumulation, or cooping up, of sexual energy, until it bursts its bounds and overflows along channels of culture, but a drying up of the source of that energy itself, so that the organism actually falls below parity, and is by no means in the best state for creative activity.

So that, if his thesis is right, which I doubt, what Dr. Unwin really needs for a perpetual rise in culture is not a society in which sexual opportunity remains at a minimum, for an extended period, or for ever, but one composed of two levels—sexually vigorous persons below and sexual moderates, recently recruited from the sexually vigorous, above. This might work in the way Dr. Unwin suggests. But when we consider the extreme sexual licence of the Renaissance century in Europe, and the extreme sexual licence of Athens in its brilliant period, we are faced with problems which Dr. Unwin does not solve. It is not enough to say that the Renaissance rationalists drew on energy dammed up in the past. Even if this were proved of the women, which would be

difficult, it could not be proved of the men; for in mediæval Europe, at least, frequent sexual intercourse was regarded as so essential that creditors responsible for imprisoning debtors, appear to have been bound twice a week to send them sufficient money to pay for the services of prostitutes. Evidently, then, the Renaissance was preceded by a long period of sexual vigour not by any damming up of the libido.

Dr. Unwin meets a further objection to his thesis (that which may be based on the different initial endowments of races) by stating that he is "inclined to think that we should be stretching the evidence unduly if we were to conclude that any collection of human organisms would manifest social energy if they were to limit their sexual opportunity." But does not this, together with the admission that "originally all cultural revolutions appear to have been introduced by individual men," strike at the root of his case? The book is clearly written, has been prepared with great care, and the author even makes a certain parade of his scientific method. It is all the more surprising, therefore, to find that there has been some muddle in the notes 18 to 22 in Chapter I.

ANTHONY LUDOVICI.

A Liberal Meliorist

PRACTICAL ETHICS. By Rt. Hon. Sir HERBERT SAMUEL, G.C.B., G.B.E. (Home University Library. 2s. 6d.)

SIR HERBERT defines good actions as "those that conduce to welfare," which is to judge them by their indirect rather than by their intrinsic value. He finds that human laws and customs exhibit much diversity of belief as to what constitutes good action; therefore he regards instinct or conscience as an unsatisfactory guide in ethics.

This is true, when actions are considered by the statesman, for different communities have had different views both as to the results to be aimed at and as to the actions which are effective in producing such results. It is not true, when actions are seen by the poet for their value in themselves. The effect on a contemporary audience when Antigone incurs the penalty of being immured alive for burying her brother in defiance of her father's command to leave the rebel unburied is, we are justified in feeling,

the same as it was two thousand four hundred years ago, whatever change may have taken place in opinion regarding the sanitary importance of the act.

Legends far older than written drama have survived because the stories have always had life for a humanity in which the emotions aroused by heroism and baseness have not changed.

Sir Herbert clearly sees heroism properly eliminated, as social science advances, although "there will remain," he says, "a margin of cases in which the only valid reason that can be given for preferring duty to inclination is some form of altruism. The smaller this margin can be made, the more likely the community will be to secure in practice among ordinary men a high average level of right action."

Sir Herbert devotes a chapter to free will, in which he believes. He quotes Schopenhauer, but without having understood that the only way in which Schopenhauer conceived that the will could be free was by being liberated from all earthly desires. He attributes popular determinism to the fact that nineteenth century science established the law of cause and effect, forgetting that Augustine, quoting Paul as an authority, made predestination a cardinal doctrine of the Western Church, while the problem was a chestnut in the Hindu religion centuries before.

As illustrating advance in the practice of ethics Sir Herbert gives a list of "what were questions but have ceased to be so"—whether drunkenness should be regarded as a vice or a foible, whether burial in churchyards should be allowed to Non-Conformists, whether marriage should be a terminable arrangement or an irrevocable sacrament. These questions, he suggests, are all answered or nearly so. We read again the familiar argument that because most states have suppressed the private duel, they will in time give up going to war with one another.

"Balm of Gilead," whatever that may be, kept coming into my mind as I read this pleasant little book of Liberal meliorism, but I was also reminded of the house of a wealthy and childless couple, who adorned their walls with little texts, non-Biblical mostly, enjoining kind thoughts, a cheerful disposition, and so on—in fact anything but to sell all and give to the poor.

BRIAN LUNN.

Stage Economics

"The Theatre." By Malcolm Morley. With a Foreword by George Arliss. (Sir Isaac Pitman and Sons, Ltd. 5s. net.)

In pleasing contrast to so many books on the same subject, this one is not the usual chatter about the footlights. It is, instead, a well-informed and carefully written volume dealing with the world of the theatre and all (or nearly all) that in it is. Mr. Morley, however, is perhaps wise in avoiding the two most vexed questions in modern theatredom. He has three lines about the Entertainment Tax, and none about Equity. For the rest, there are chapters on the dramatist, production, repertory, censorship, critics, finance, and management, etc., with expert and individual views.

Mr. Malcolm Morley, who has established a substantial niche by his work as director of the Everyman Theatre, Hampstead, explains what Grub Street still calls the *raison d'être* of the producer and his problems and difficulties. This branch is not always understood. Disappointed actors, whom he has neglected to engage, are apt to dub the producer a "parasite" and to make bitter remarks about him in the nearest Bodega. But, as Mr. Morley says, "how can one man have the patience of Job and the attack of Napoleon?"

Mr. Morley has few illusions. Instead, he has enthusiasms. Certain of his opinions will be in conflict with those of his fellow managers; and annoyance will possibly be registered at some of his remarks about dramatic critics. He is daring enough to say of them that they are "not infallible." As to repertory, the flag, he points out, has been run up repeatedly. It has seldom, however, been nailed to the mast. The economics of the box office are the first consideration. Hear him, too, on another subject: "An amount of the dull and listless acting to-day in the West End is occasioned by the actor's preoccupation with the cinema. His vitality is absorbed by the film studio, where he spends the day. On the stage at night he has little left for his part." Mr. Cochran has said the same thing—several times.

In the provinces the situation is worse than in London. Sir Gregory Gasbags and Mr. Crummles have been ousted from their stronghold by the ubiquitous cinema. But not only Messrs. Gasbags and Crummles. West End "stars" of the first magnitude, confronted by celluloid, are apt to find themselves everywhere playing to empty benches.

Mr. Malcolm Morley has been through the entire gamut—from actor to playwright, from playwright to producer, from producer to director, and from director to "sole lessee and manager," with incursions into criticism and the films. Probably the only omission in his career is that of "backer." But, then—except for the happening of being a producer—he is not a gambler.

Any fool of a manager can, by taking a little thought, "give the public what it wants." To give the public what it does not want (but what is good for it), and to succeed in doing so, is a much greater achievement. A study of this book will help to solve the problem. It should be in the prize list of the Royal Academy of Dramatic Art.

HORACE WYNDHAM.

Fiction

SARABAND FOR DEAD LOVERS. By HELEN SIMPSON. (Heinemann. 7s. 6d.)
APPOINTMENT IN SAMARRA. By JOHN O'HARA. (Faber & Faber. 7s. 6d.)
MY NEXT BRIDE. By KAY BOYLE. (Faber. 7s. 6d.)
A DERBYSHIRE TRAGEDY. By F. C. BODEN. (Dent. 7s. 6d.)
A LONDON STORY. By GEORGE BUCHANAN. (Constable. 7s. 6d.)
THE APPLE OF CONCORD. By RICHARD CHURCH. (Dent. 7s. 6d.)

LOUTISHNESS in high places, distinction in distress, a romantic young girl forced to make a very disagreeable marriage of convenience; these are favourite themes with Miss Simpson, who understands how historical novels should be written, which is as if they were not "historical" at all. This time her heroine is the girl-wife of the German boor who afterward became George I. The Court in Hanover is the setting, and a vivid picture is given of what these political marriages could mean to one rebelling in all her instincts, but with no talent for intrigue and no experience in adventure. The young bride, Sophie-Dorothea, her mother-in-law, her husband, his father, the latter's mistress, and her lover, Count Konigsmark, are the chief characters. The best scene is when her husband returns from the war and by simply teasing surprises a secret she is too impulsive and inexperienced to conceal. It is all the more interesting because only their circumstances separate the characters from ourselves, and people who do not like historical novels will be able to read this because the characters are real and the atmosphere is not romanticized.

The realistic treatment suits the coarse characters described. They would (we feel) recognize themselves and be proud of their portraits. The book will enhance Miss Simpson's reputation.

Far more strange and remote is Mr. O'Hara's American novel, described as a best-seller in the States. The trouble for us with this is not want of skill in the author, but that there is no quality in the inhabitants of the small town that he describes. These creatures of appetite may be true to their originals, but it is hard to find interest in beings no more substantial than the figures seen in a film. With richer material Mr. O'Hara would be better worth reading. Miss Kay Boyle's "My Next Bride" is a sordid story of a poor pension and a craft colony in Paris. The characters drift through an inconsequent narrative which immediately fades so soon as the last page has been turned. They illustrate the contention that Europeans are becoming Americanized, which tendency is accompanied by the sensation that something valuable has been lost.

Mr. F. C. Boden, himself a miner, returns to the subject he knows so well. The heart of his story is much more the conditions of life produced by commercial greed than the two horrible accidents depicted. He evidently writes at first hand, and to read this moving story is to live in the coalfields. His characters are mostly unspoiled human types tormented by a system they know to be evil, but with nothing more than a human instinct to criticize it. There are no agitators here, but dumb, simple-minded men caught in a snare, who distrust familiar remedies as much as the system itself. Their talk is pathetic, but everyone who enjoys a coal fire can learn from these pages the daily life of the men who live in the mines. Mr. Boden excels at convincing description, which is all the more moving because it seems neither exaggerated nor tendentious. No reader can fail to be interested and the book leaves a memory impossible to forget.

Mr. Buchanan's new book, but first novel, is a rather faint picture of life in a huge shop. The pushing brother and the unambitious brother make one contrast; their respective wives and counterparts another. When the unambitious brother is dismissed from the shop, the creeping mental paralysis of the unemployed is vividly depicted. The story stops rather than ends when its initial circle is completed, but the author seems most interested in attempting to discover an attitude of "living in the present," even though this present be one in which hardly any such workers are happy in their work. On the whole, the

commentary seems to flow from a deeper instinct than the narrative, but this book may contain the germ of an attitude to the servile state that the younger generation is experimenting with. The women are drawn vividly, but the book stops too soon and that we wish it to continue shows that it has held our interest. If you read it twice, as I have, the pattern of the story is found to be more elaborate than at a first reading.

The "Apple of Concord" is refreshing because it describes the recovery of a character instead of the more familiar breakdown. The scene is in France, where a broken Englishman finds himself in a circle of French and Americans and gradually recovers health and poise under their mixed attentions. The analysis of his plight is extended, but toward the climax (which includes a murder and two arrests in Paris) the story moves briskly to a happy and satisfying end. The wastrel, Lincoln Farthing, is well drawn; so is his old father, the artist, and the vagaries of all these people have a rich background in the landscape of France. Mr. Richard Church has several talents as a novelist, that of sustaining interest among them. With much already to his credit, he has probably not yet written the novel that will fully display his powers.

OSBERT BURDETT.

Modern Prose

MODERN PROSE STYLE. By BONAMY DOBRÉE. Oxford University Press. 6s. net.

MR. DOBRÉE instinctively mistrusts anyone who pontificates, and this charming exposition of the different kinds of prose style is so far from pontifical that he prefaces it with the remark: "Authors and critics will either find what I have to say commonplace and obvious or will be irritated into disagreement." This is perhaps the one statement in the book he should have hesitated to make, for there is nothing either commonplace, obvious or irritating in these pages; one could not be bored or irritated by such a delightful and sensitive companion. To see, hear and feel prose through the exquisite perceptions of Mr. Dobrée is an experience for which one is simply grateful.

Indeed, the great charm and value of the book lies not so much in the apt selection of the illustrative passages, or in the lucid comment, as in the living communication of experience which it conveys to the reader. Mr. Dobrée says that he wrote this book for his own instruction, and the quality of the

criticism in it is alive and personal. For instance, in comparing a passage from George Moore with one from Virginia Woolf he says: "Both writers depend for their effect upon the shape itself of the sentence, upon the inner modulations, and especially upon the play of vowel sounds, yet when you read them you find that you are forming Mrs. Woolf's prose further forward in the mouth, nearer the lips, than Moore's." That is only a small point, but it shows the directness and immediacy with which Mr. Dobrée speaks.

He divides prose into descriptive, explanatory and emotive prose: each of these is discussed in a section illustrated by examples, good and bad, from modern and a few ancient writers. In the last section of the book Mr. Dobrée considers modern prose style more generally as "a new way of writing." By the time this last section is reached even the most awkward squad of readers will have become less awkward, if not actually supple, after following Mr. Dobrée, and may even venture to disagree with him here and there, having been brought to such a pitch of discrimination that they can pipe up in their own voices.

Modern prose style, Mr. Dobrée thinks, is essentially a return to speech rhythms, an attempt to render honestly and without frills the movement of a mind thinking something out, in a world where all is in confusion and nothing is certain but the scrupulousness with which each individual can observe himself. This conclusion is formed partly on a judgment that style is not "ornament," not "a caper or complication of some sort," but an emanation from the whole man. Modern prose style is thus not Style, but *a* style, the style in which a man talks, the style in which his spirit moves, the style which makes a man himself and not somebody else. And it is difficult to find, just as it is difficult for a man to find his true self. This statement of the modern way of writing is admirable and just; but, having followed Mr. Dobrée so far, I am encouraged to ask whether there may not be some confusion in assuming that "ornament" is an excrescence, that "ornament" is not an integral part of the whole, a logical statement completing the whole? May we not be reacting too much from the meaningless ornamentation plastered on by earlier generations if we say that all "ornament" is undesirable? We do well to shrink from Style with a capital S, but may we not cut a caper when we feel like it? Must we streamline our characters and the style of our writing as much

as we streamline our motor-cars? And all speech is not streamlined: there are as many styles in speaking as there are unpredictable and spontaneous outbreaks in life.

Mr. Dobrée could doubtless make this clear: perhaps he will pursue his researches into modern prose. One could not have too much of his researching.

WILLA MUIR.

A New French Novelist

STORM IN SHANGHAI. By ANDRÉ MALRAUX. Translated by ALASTAIR MACDONALD. (Methuen. 7s. 6d.)

"Storm in Shanghai" is the translation of "La Condition Humaine," the 1933 Goncourt prizewinner. The original title is symbolically more apt since M. Malraux's fundamental preoccupations are metaphysical—the attempt to situate his characters philosophically and to arm them with a transcending principle of action against the solitude and the void in which without exception they find themselves. This is the real psychological plot for which the Shanghai Communist rising of 1927 provides not only a vivid and dramatic background, but also an occasion to test the validity of a principle of action born directly of a European dilemma. M. Malraux has this in common with M. Celine that he is a European in search of a lost (spiritual and communal) integrity (a quest which I would define as being the final phase of Western man's faustian stage of experience); but while M. Celine, more frankly perhaps, admits himself baffled, M. Malraux has the merit to advocate action at any cost. Historically, the latter's militant principle would seem to gain justification, though as applied in his book it contributes to an artistic rather than to a social solution of the problem he raises, since all his heroes perish on the "scaffold," leaving the world very much as it is.

Like Macbeth, "Storm in Shanghai" opens with a murder which at once plunges the reader into a world of fatality, anguished debate and sustained dramatic interest. Hour by hour, day by day, the plot of the revolt unfolds, seen now from the point of view of the revolutionaries, now from that of their opponents: the hectic preparations, the street fighting, the momentary victory, the dissensions, apprehension, defeat, torture and death. These are the events reflected in the lives of the *dramatis personæ* for which the intellect and the emotions seek to

furnish a justification, or, finally, at least a vestige of heroic dignity. The principal characters—Chen, for whom assassination becomes the justifiable end of his existence, Kyo, whose driving force is premeditated Revolution, and Katow, for whom Marxism is an exercise of the will, or even Ferral, the capitalist and man of action, are all haunted by an urge after the absolute, but they only succeed in re-discovering themselves and solitude, even in the arms of the women they love. Action becomes their only salvation and oblivion, but it leads them inevitably to death, on the threshold of which they live their most solitary and exalted moment and assume the dignity with which they would have liked to see themselves invested in life. Such is Perken's exaltation in the "Voie Royale," Chen's, when he immolates himself by jumping under Chang Kai Shek's car with a bomb, and Katow's when, knowing the horrible death by burning in store for him, he yet gives away the poison that would have eased his end.

M. Malraux's characters then thirst for some affirmation, certitude or absolute revelation in life. Unlike Gisors, Kyo's philosopher father, whom opium helps to a detached and harmonious vision of life, they cannot accept a philosophy based on "the contemplation of suffering" or a world weighed down by "the fatalities of dogma, of the laws and of matter" as Victor Hugo once put it. No doctrinaires—for even Marxism to them is rather a discipline or an opportunity for action—they feel the necessity to transcend themselves. They (Kyo and May) are as unhappy in love as Ferral (and Valerie) and they find it difficult to understand human beings. Tracked by the spectre of solitude, they make a superhuman effort to rise above their "human estate," but only to espouse death. Therein lies the antithesis between their world and Gisors' world of "living and continuous death." M. Malraux's *act* is a step beyond André Gide's rather puerile *acte gratuite*, and it represents an attempt to fill the "void" with *heroic content* and *structure* rather than with poignant rhetoric as does Celine.

In "Storm in Shanghai," M. Malraux has summed up and explored more deeply the issues already outlined in his "Les Conquerants" (1928) and "La Voie Royale" (1930). The result is a dramatically constructed novel of tragic intensity, terseness and austere beauty, which unmistakably places the author in the front rank of present-day French writers.

GEORGE REAVEY.

Books Recommended

BRIGHTON. By OSBERT SITWELL and MARGARET BARTON. (Faber & Faber. 15s.)

DISRAELI, GLADSTONE AND THE EASTERN QUESTION. By R. W. SETON-WATSON. (Macmillan. 21s.)

SELECTIONS FROM WORDSWORTH. Edited by B. IFOR EVANS. (Methuen. 3s. 6d.)

OUT OF DOORS WITH RICHARD JEFFERIES. An Anthology. (J. M. Dent. 3s. 6d.)

THE WOLVES. By GUY MAZELINE. (Translated by ERIC SUTTON.) (Lovat Dickson. 10s. 6d.)

SAMUEL BUTLER. A CHRONICLE AND AN INTRODUCTION. By R. F. RATTRAY (Duckworth. 5s.)

RELIGIOUS THOUGHT IN FRANCE IN THE NINETEENTH CENTURY. By CANON W. J. SPARROW SIMPSON. (Allen & Unwin. 5s.)

Club Gossip

By Quid Nunc

THIS year Generals and General Staffs as well as the junior officers and rank and file will learn something from the field training programmes arranged for the Army during the summer months. Two Army Corps are to be engaged in " mortal strife," that is to say two Divisions on each side, sufficient to give the leaders and their Staffs scope to have experience in moving about something more than the mere " handfuls " of men they have had to manœuvre for the past nine years. It is an amazing fact that none of our present Generals have ever had the experience of moving about a reasonably large body of men. They need training in that respect as much as the men do in their respective spheres of duty.

* * *

THE new German Army of twelve Army Corps will be better appreciated in size, if it is compared with our Army. We have as the Home Garrison, including all men in Northern Ireland, Scotland, Wales and England, about two and a half Army Corps. In India we have about the same sized British Army. In China, Malaya, Burma, Egypt, Malta, Gibraltar and the West Indies, just about another Corps in all—or a total strength of six Corps in our Regular Army. Hence the new German Regular Army will be at least twice as big. The supplementary military trained German organisations run into the strength of millions or many Corps, while our Territorial Army could only muster about five Corps at full strength, but it would take months, if not a year, to mobilize even this strength.

THE above comparison allows two Divisions to a Corps on either side. As a matter of fact the new German Army Corps consists of three Divisions each, which increases preponderatingly their armed land strength. One may well ask " For what purpose? "

* * *

THERE are two classes of men—one young, the other in the prime of life—to whom the future means everything. The young man who has his career to carve out, and the man in the prime of life who finds himself out of work at that time through no fault of his own and must get a post, especially if he has a family on his hands. To the latter class belong often soldiers, sailors and airmen, who have been compulsorily retired or " axed " as has been the case with many since the war, and is to be the case this year and succeeding years as the British officer strength of the Indian Army is being steadily reduced. These men, even more than the young men, have to face the world a second time and do not know what on earth to do.

THE field for work in the Dominions of Australia and Canada is not what it was. New settlers are strictly rationed out. South Africa, however, welcomes

able settlers who possess moderate capital. There is a great future for South ica, but that future is in a sense dependent upon the vast lands of the Union g peopled with the best types of settlers the Mother Country can send. The th Africa of to-day is so vastly improved from the South Africa of thirty rs ago as to be almost unrecognizable. In all the amenities of civilization there tremendous improvement, so much so that those who know life in South Africa are not at all anxious to exchange it for life anywhere else.

HE 1820 Memorial Settlers' Association, which has already done for years past yeoman work in introducing into the Dominion many men retired from Three Services and from the Civil Services and business sides of life as well he vigorous and ambitious young man desirous of settling in South Africa, has eral Settlers' Categories to suit various classes. Married men with or without ilies, who have a minimum capital of £2,000, unmarried men, with a capital of least £1,500, settlers going out to guaranteed employment, agricultural and -agricultural, individuals and families with assured incomes ranging from £400 £250 a year, and young men from the Public or Secondary Schools who can vide a capital of £1,000 as a start.

O these classes there are opportunities to have reduced steamship fares, courses of free training in farming, expert advice on land purchase and farm blishment, selection of suitable localities, loans of money in approved cases, general advice as to living, health, conditions and educational facilities. other words the Association becomes "a second parent," and South Africa to-day many happy settler residents who owe much to the skill and care with which 1820 Memorial Settlers' Association have looked after their interests from the set. The Association is still going strong and ready to assist would-be settlers South Africa.

* * *

HIS season Jubilee celebrations will mean entertaining on the grand scale. Hosts will welcome this tip for a new drink which I discovered last summer—onterice" with a dash of soda or tonic water. For the unenlightened, onterice" is a French Vermouth of unusually fine and subtle flavour. On mish days it is a cooling, soothing beverage, and likely to be more generally eptable than the ubiquitous cocktail. This excellent French Vermouth is by means expensive, and my tip should therefore appeal to both palate and ket.

* * *

ITH the season of Lent drawing to an end it is to be hoped that the charitable-minded will not have forgotten the claims of the Salvation Army with its d-wide appeal. The Established Churches have each their own special circle which to draw, but the Army depends on everyone. I need not point out it has accomplished during its history in the holy cause of charity. Its erous night shelters, its food for the down and outs and hungry, its homes for tired and forgotten, the orphan and the fatherless, and its splendid work to k down the barriers of unemployment and want, all this should appeal. Money to the Army is well spent. It is not spent upon luxuries but upon vital

necessities, and penny for penny goes further than possibly any other money g for charitable purposes.

"GENERAL" Booth's name will live long in the annals of Christian ende and charity. The new "General"—a chip of the old block if she will not me saying so—has already infused into the Army a new lease of vigour and denial, the two virtues which constitute success in its apostolic labours. The no right-minded person of any denomination who does not wish the Army an leader well.

* * *

"30 miles per hour speed," more or less, but it matters not if the c fitted with a Zenith "V" type carburettor. The Zenith Carbur Company, 40–44, Newman Street, W.1, send an outfit on 30 days' free trial are bold enough to promise more miles per gallon, instant starting and get without undue cylinder wear or crank case dilution, "snap" acceleration, com absence of flat spots, strong pulling power, especially on hills, and everything to make for general smoothness of motor performance, or else the return wi charge of the "V" type. I like firms that are definite, decisive and determ and thoroughly alive to the good qualities of their goods. They know a thing when they have one or see one. The British standard of excellence is h than that of any other country in the world and the pity is that our manufact do not recognize this always. Foreign makers come in with loud shouting the public believes them. There are times and occasions when we should pro the virtues of our wares from the housetops.

* * *

WITH the coming of April the winter will be gone, the mildest winter k for many a long year. The Jubilee Celebrations will be in "very a preparation" and I am certain no participation in these Celebration arrangements will be more thankfully welcomed by the King and Queen those which have in view some permanent and beneficial help to the cou And at once there comes to mind the needs of the Hospitals which work unceas amid many difficulties and many of them among the poor of the land. Mary's Hospital, Stratford, right away in the heart of the East End, wel nobly named, is a case in point. The pence of the poor have helped it, as from time to time the generous contributions of others. But it requires most of all, among its many needs, a new Operating Theatre.

I AM sure if Queen Mary knew that in honour of the Jubilee a sum of £ had been provided for the purpose, Her Majesty would be deeply gratified. Hospital has at present 219 beds; it should have 500; its Maternity Hospita work of which the medical profession is proud; there is ground availab extension; while around the Hospital live the poorest of the poor of Lo The first need is for a new Operating Suite, to cost £15,000. Surely this sum found by hearts, grateful for the blessings of health and for the spirit of k which binds rich and poor alike to the Throne of England.

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THE ENGLISH REVIEW

29th Year of Publication

Edited by DOUGLAS JERROLD

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Correspondence

To the Editor of THE ENGLISH REVIEW

SIR,—I read Major Kerans's letter with great interest, unshaken by an i assumption on his part which was not quite correct.

I note that he is " in complete agreement " with as much as five-sixths of w I say, and I suggest that if he would reflect a little longer on the sense of remarks, he might come to see that there is little cause for disagreement ove remaining fraction.

Alternative Objectives.—He fears that the idea of alternative objectives become a rigid formula like the " oblique order " etc. But if he would paus might perceive that the former carries with it its own safeguard against ab For the idea of having alternative objectives is only an aspect of the powe variability, or elasticity. It is inherently impossible that anything that is ela can be rigid.

I agree with him that there are limits to the possibility of having alterna objectives, but if he had referred to the book where I define this idea, he wo have seen that I was careful to make the qualification " where possible." Ma Kerans remarks that, in the tactical sphere, such a choice is only open to an offi who holds an independent command—is he not himself rather too rigidly confin the picture to war as it was waged on the Western front in 1918? I agree th under such conditions the use of alternative objectives by a subordinate command may not *seem* possible, but if one thinks a little deeper, one may see that it do in effect, lie at the basis of the infiltration tactics which all armies learnt to ado in the last year of the War.

The Horse.—Here again the difference between our views seems trifling, one realizes that the actual situation to-day is not that the Army uses horses supplement motors but is still mainly dependent on horses for its first line, combatant, transport. When the Army has been transformed to a more mob and less vulnerable means of movement, I should be quite ready to consider desirability of having the animal as an alternative means to fall back on. So far the very limited supplies of animals permit. That attitude would be in accorda with the supreme law of adaptability which governs war, as it governs all li At present we are still in the position of retaining one main means of movement the less efficient one.

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It may be worth emphasis that even if the Army were wholly mechanized its requirements in petrol would be only a small fraction of this country's total requirements. If we had to make a choice in an emergency, it would hardly seem common sense to keep the more efficient means for use in our streets, and use the less efficient means in fighting our battles. May I also remind Major Kerans that progress in the production of home-produced fuel has already gone far.

Anti-Aircraft Defences.—I cannot think of anything which should lead Major Kerans to conclude that I "appear to think that the mechanization of transport helps to confer immunity from air attack." To reduce vulnerability is quite a different thing from conferring immunity. Any reduction of vulnerability is worth seeking.

While no one has emphasised more than I have the risks that motor columns suffer from air attack, I should be unreasonable if I did not take some note of the fact that air observers emphasize the far greater ease with which they can detect a long close column of horse transport than a series of motor vehicles "flitting" along the roads.

I wish that I could share Major Kerans's hopeful attitude towards the effectiveness of anti-aircraft gunnery—under war conditions. But even if we were justified in assuming this, there are two points which make me wonder whether it is "at least as necessary" to provide anti-aircraft guns for the Army as to provide tanks. For, first, there is the question whether we could, or could afford to, provide enough guns to protect the Army adequately against air attack, and second, to spend our available money in this way when we have a glaring insufficiency of tanks, suggests that the primary purpose of the Army is the defence of itself rather than the defence of the Empire. A distinctly curious suggestion.

Yours truly,

B. H. LIDDELL HART.

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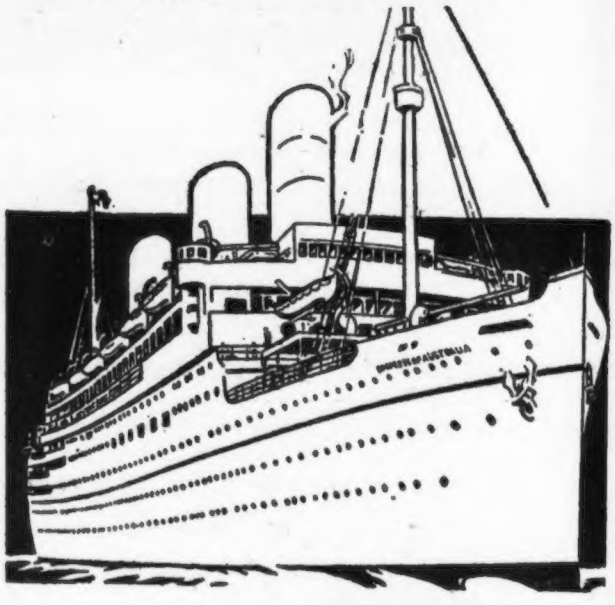

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